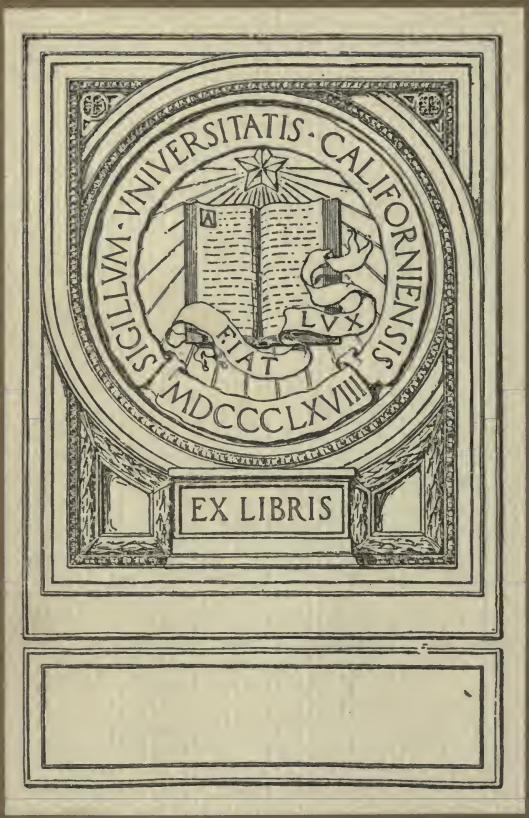
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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

THE present work is a translation of the third edition of *Sexualethik und Sexualpädagogik*, by Dr. F. W. Foerster, Special Lecturer on Psychology and Ethics at the University of Zürich. All over the continent of Europe this book has received a warm welcome, and it has already been translated into French and Italian. Speaking of it, the late Professor Fr. Paulsen, one of the deepest and most earnest thinkers of modern times, said: "In an age like ours, it is an inspiration to read such a book as that which Dr. Foerster has just given us: . . the author has had the courage boldly to set up the traditional standards of conduct and morality in the face of all that is hollow, perverted, and would-be exalted in modern life. He writes with power and conviction, yet without falling into the tone of the moral preacher. . ."

In order properly to understand Foerster's views, it is essential to know something of his unusual development, and as a friend and old student of his I need make no apology for the following very brief introduction. Friedrich Wilhelm Foerster was born at Berlin in 1869, and was brought up in an entirely non-religious atmosphere. On completing his university course, he felt that his education had

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been too abstract, too academic, and that he was not sufficiently in touch with real life. He was thus led to throw himself into the study of social questions at first hand, not only in Germany, but also in England and America. His sympathies were at first strongly socialistic (he was even imprisoned for the cause), and he remained aloof from all forms of religion; but with increasing experience he came to regard socialism as deficient in moral and spiritual insight. He perceived that truly to uplift the people something more is necessary than a re-arrangement of material conditions, something more, too, than the rather vague humanitarianism of the socialist. The conviction was forced upon him that no Utopia, however skilfully organised, could save the human race, without a greatly increased inward development on the part of the individual. Turning his attention, therefore, to moral and educational questions, Foerster attached himself to the International Union of Ethical Societies, and did much valuable work in connection with moral education. Not the least of his services at this stage of his career was the writing of *Jugendlehre*, a book on the moral training of the young, which rapidly made his name known throughout the whole civilised world. First published in 1905, *Jugendlehre* has now run to some forty editions and has been translated into at least ten languages, a remarkable testimony not only to the unique character of the work itself, but also to the great and universal interest which is now being taken in moral education. All this while Foerster was gradually coming to the conviction that morality, standing alone, lacked a secure basis, and that the highest

development of character would not be attained in the absence of religious belief. Speaking of ethical training he has said: "It sends up a call for religious inspiration out of the depths of its own psychology." Totally uninfluenced by any religious training or by any atmosphere of belief, but following only the *inner necessities* of his own social and educational work, Foerster drew nearer and nearer to Christianity, until, after a still further development, he became convinced that the Christian religion was the sole foundation for both social and individual life. He thus came into sharp conflict with many of his former associates, who advocated secular education and wished to set religion aside as controversial and non-essential. To them he addressed the following words (in an article written in September 1909): "To me the Christian religion is not a mere matter of taste, an affair which has nothing to do with the fundamentals of life; rather do I adhere fully to the words of the apostle: 'For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid.' Am I to keep silent about this? Am I to leave untouched that which is to me the central fact of all, in order to devote my attention to what is merely non-committal—although I clearly see that it is a disastrous delusion for the educator to regard this neutral basis as in itself sufficient?"

It will at once be obvious that in Foerster's development we see a remarkable illustration of some of the most significant tendencies of the present age: for example, the movement from materialism towards religion and the reaction against intellectualism. Foerster is one of those figures who, at a period

of transition, stand above the shifting and transitory opinions of the crowd and with unwavering hand point out the path of future progress. As Rudolf Eucken says, in *The Meaning and Value of Life:* "A paralysing doubt saps the vitality of our age. We see a clear proof of this in the fact that, with all our astounding achievements and unremitting progress, we are not really happy. There is no pervading sense of confidence and security. . . . Alternative systems, alternative ideals, fundamentally different in kind, solicit alike our adhesion." In common with Eucken, Foerster has long been keenly sensitive to the doubt and indecision of the modern world. His educational work, in particular, has forced upon him the absolute necessity for a firm basis, a clear positive ideal, a centre around which all the activities of humanity can be grouped. He perceives that, after generations of a too exclusive occupation with outward and technical progress, accompanied by a serious neglect of inner life, we now stand in need of a moral and spiritual consolidation. Our attention must be diverted from the *external* to the *internal* needs of man. Once let men turn with sufficient earnestness to the central and inner problems of our existence, and Foerster is convinced that Christianity will stand forth as the only true foundation of our whole life and civilisation.

It must not be supposed that the foregoing is in the least irrelevant to the subject of the present work. Foerster firmly maintains that the sex question cannot be considered apart from *life as a whole* and without reference to our fundamental convictions.

Sex is one of the essential facts of life, and cannot possibly be dealt with as a thing standing by itself. The earlier portions of this work are therefore devoted to laying the *general foundations* upon which the author bases his following treatment of the special problems of marriage, sexual education, and so forth.

The peculiar value of Foerster's contribution to these much discussed questions lies, I think, in the fact that he stands, not upon abstract reason, but upon a concrete observation of life, and an unusually profound first-hand study of individual and social psychology.

MEYRICK BOOTH.

LETCHWORTH, HERTS,
October 1912.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

THE growing sexual laxity and degeneration of the modern world has caused the educators of all lands to turn their eyes in the direction of sexual ethics and education. A considerable literature has resulted, based, for the most part, upon the following ideas: that the Christian Church has from the beginning looked upon the sex instinct as something sinful and shameful, the claims and function of which should be veiled in obscurity; that as a result young people have been left to the dangers and responsibilities of life without any adequate knowledge and preparation; and that their situation becomes increasingly impossible the more modern economic life withdraws young people from parental control at an early age and exposes them to a thousand uncontrollable influences. It is further asserted, in the majority of these modern publications, that the best means of combating the threatened moral danger is as early and complete as possible an *instruction* in the nature and dangers of sexual relationships.

To me the foregoing point of view reveals an altogether abstract and exaggerated belief in the power of rational instruction in the presence of

human impulses and passions. It is true enough that some earnest and plain words with regard to sexual matters should be included within a complete education. But in order to discover the right limit and the right place, and in order to employ the necessary tact, one must be quite clear upon the following points:

1. The foundation of all sound education in sex must consist in *distracting* the mind from sexual matters, not in directing it towards them.

2. The problem of moral preservation in this sphere is a question of *power* far more than of *knowledge*. Now, it is upon these two fundamental facts that the sexual education of the traditional Christian type has been built up. Our modern educators are no more than beginners in the great problem of the care of souls and the development of conscience, and they would have done well to have learnt in this difficult sphere from the great spiritual and psychological knowledge and pedagogical experience of the Church, instead of attempting to base themselves solely upon their own ideas and upon their own fragmentary experience.

The author of this book comes from the ranks of those who dispense with all religion. But as the result of long experience, theoretical and practical, in the difficult work of character-training, he has been led to realise for himself the deep meaning and the profound pedagogical wisdom of the Christian method of caring for souls, and to appreciate, through his own experience, the value of the old truths. From this point of view he ventures in the present study to criticise the proposals of many of the

modern writers upon the sex problem and sexual education. He has absolutely no doubt that modern education, in discovering the extraordinary practical difficulties of character-training, will be increasingly cured of its optimistic illusions and led back to an understanding and appreciation of Christianity.

Education in sexual matters means the education of nature by the spirit—and this is not possible without a clear and definite *ethic of sex*, an ethic which is able, on behalf of the spirit and its claims, to offer a perfectly firm front to the untutored natural impulses. No such ethic is possible upon the basis of modern materialism or naturalism. It can come from religion alone. The more deeply the educator comprehends his problem, the more rapidly he will be led back to religious education; and similarly, the more realistically the ethicist grasps human nature in his study of the problem of sex, and the more thoroughly he considers the conditions under which the sexual impulses can be effectively disciplined and socialised, the more he will be constrained to abandon the materialistic standpoint and to recognise the indispensability of the Christian ethic.

The dogmatists of the "free-thinking" party have hastened to condemn the present work on account of its "catholicising tendency." Let me remind them of Spinoza's words: *Non flere, non ridere, sed intelligere.* This school of thought takes peculiar pride in its intellectual freedom. But is it in accordance with the spirit of free inquiry to reject a genuine scientific opinion because it happens to be in agreement with the standpoint of the Catholic

Church? The author of this book is not a Catholic. *He writes solely as a psychologist, sociologist, and educator.* At the same time he is not afraid to own his convictions because they coincide with the principles of the historic Christian Church.

For example, in the chapter "The Indispensability of the Ascetic Ideal"—which has been subject to a peculiarly sharp attack—the author has not been in the least influenced by any religious bias, nor does he base his position upon any theological creed; he has merely investigated the ultimate psychological foundations of firm and stable character, and in this investigation he has become convinced of the great value of the ascetic principle. He has striven to show, for example, that a large number of definite ethical principles (such as the rejection of all sexual intercourse outside the marriage relationship) cannot, as a matter of fact, be carried out in many of the situations we meet with in real life (in case of the wife's more or less permanent ill-health, for example) without a high degree of ascetic power. Real monogamy demands, in many cases, no small amount of continence. The spirit of continence should therefore be encouraged by specific examples and a recognised valuation. The modern tendency to reject the monogamic ethic is due, in my opinion, in a large degree to the fact that in wide circles of society the strict demands of the monogamic marriage have come to be quite incompatible with the modern incapacity for severe self-control. Without a recognition, *on principle*, of the value of asceticism and without its educational assistance, people will

not acquire and retain a certain and ripened power for the controlling of natural instincts; they will, moreover, perceive no real meaning in the great sacrifices which they are called upon to make in this direction. In the modern view of life, even among many religious people of a "free" tendency, the strictly monogamous marriage stands like a solitary pillar still bearing witness to an age of greater tenacity and self-control. It is no accident that even in liberal Protestant circles there is not only an atmosphere of considerable insecurity in respect of marriage, but a tendency to make very remarkable concessions.

There are to-day many who are deeply convinced that the "new sex ethic" as a whole is nothing more than a sad but passing phase, the sole utility of which will be that it may serve as a valuable illustration of the incredible ideas which even gifted and well-meaning people may evolve when, in such difficult matters as these, they rely solely upon their own intellect, and are guided in their solution of the sex problem merely by any one-sided considerations which happen to occur to them from their own narrow point of view. On the other hand, there are many who look upon the ancient ethic as a remote dream, as something which has been radically superseded, and indeed could never flourish except in an atmosphere of prejudice, obscurity, and oppression, as something which is doomed to certain disappearance before the triumphant self-security of new thought. And there are not a few followers of the traditional order who ask themselves secretly: "Am I, after all, fight-

ing for a lost cause?" In reply we can only say: the abstract and impracticable character of all these modern theories would long ago have been clearly exposed, and they would have become matter for laughter, if the dignity of the old order were not still operative even in our "advanced" circles, preventing the real and necessary consequences of the modern theories from becoming properly apparent. The time is only too soon coming when those who are now the victims of folly and blindness will be compelled to realise that there are eternal truths which cannot be set aside with impunity by any would-be wisdom of to-day, truths which will rise again with renewed power when their non-existence has been most confidently assumed.

The author knows well enough that the point of view which he has set himself to defend contradicts nearly all those ideas which modern "advanced" thought has come to regard as almost axiomatic. The present work will without doubt be made an object of bitter and even contemptuous attacks. Just as water boils and hisses when it comes in contact with fire, so worldly thought will rise in resentment when confronted with the thoroughgoing and logical Christian view of life. It remains a fact, however, that a merely secular type of thought is itself unequal to meeting the realities of the world and of human nature. As increasingly large masses of people fall under its exclusive influence, the more obvious will this become, and the more humanity will again begin to realise that only from those thoughts which range far beyond the limits of

merely earthly existence comes the vivifying and liberating power which is alone capable of embracing every aspect of reality.

Comte described the disintegration of all definite and authoritative truths as the "disease of the Western World." Recently there have been unmistakable signs that this disease is not confined to the Continent, but has already attacked the population of Great Britain. The ancient Puritan tradition is rapidly losing its power over men's souls, while the old positive and compelling truths are increasingly giving way to mere vague and nebulous opinions. In literature, in the drama, in the comic papers, and in the fashionable world, the "seamy side of life" is becoming daily less shocking and more popular. Moral sin and failure serve to provide material for a heroic pose, while the *ten weaknesses of man have become the ten commandments of the "new ethic."* A pleasure-seeking individualism is becoming the commanding principle of practical conduct, and in the sphere of sex is replacing all social and religious considerations. The *artificial restriction of the family* is making a rapid conquest of English domestic life, while the *facilitation of divorce* is looked to as a further means of escape from the great moral problems and responsibilities of marriage. The old ideal of loyalty, with its immense educational power—one of the pillars of all higher culture and civilisation—has become a thing of mockery, and sexual purity is looked upon as unhealthy. All these concessions to the "natural man" not only tend to undermine character in the sphere of sex, but they help to

destroy the authority of spiritual ideals in every other sphere of life.

There is a growing number of earnest men and women who perceive with ever-increasing clearness towards what end these tendencies must lead us. It is my earnest desire that this book may be of assistance in uniting them, and confirming them in their convictions.

F. W. FOERSTER.

UNIVERSITY OF ZÜRICH,
August 1912.

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PART I

THE ETHICS OF SEX

CALIFORNIA

MARRIAGE AND THE SEX-PROBLEM

CHAPTER I

A PRELIMINARY QUESTION: ANARCHY OR AUTHORITY?

In the Negro districts of the southern states of America it not infrequently happens that some barefoot Negro suddenly begins to preach with the cry, "I have got a call!" One is often reminded of this sort of lay priesthood on observing how, nowadays, almost everyone considers himself called upon to set up his own theory of the deepest problems of human life, and to pit his piece of current wisdom against the *consensus sapentium* of the centuries. In this great age of criticism the most important of all criticism is unfortunately more than ever wanting—namely self-criticism, the exact measuring of the limited range of our individual experience and observation, and the objective valuation of the subjective springs of disturbance in our thought and judgment, factors which loom larger the more our own action and inaction are passed in review.

This lack of self-examination is particularly obvious at the present day in the treatment of ethical questions. In every other sphere of thought we require

of an author who wishes to be taken seriously, years of concentrated study upon every aspect of the question, and a thorough appreciation of all that has been already thought on the subject. The sphere of ethics alone is free to all comers, a playground for the most superficial dilettantism and the most blatant vagaries. Is this state of things due perhaps to the fact that these problems are by their very nature accessible to everyone? Yet this accessibility is no more than apparent. The study of human conduct is concerned with facts and combinations operating in the most hidden depths of historical and individual life, and approachable only to the slightest extent by methods of simple scientific investigation. This sphere of life yields up its secrets only to a profound and universal experience of life, or to an exceptional intuition. Again in this region the courageous and impartial statement of all the consequences of action and of all the facts of experience is very seriously hindered; because here the consistent desire for truth is utterly opposed to human impulses, desires and passions. And since in most people these elemental forces, consciously or unconsciously, have the mastery, or at all events exercise an extraordinary influence over their thought, this subjective constraint incontestably proves the absolute inability of the great bulk of mankind to think really objectively in the sphere of ethics without higher direction. We will not show up our peccadilloes, we will not have any great responsibilities, we want no consistent self-restraint, no ever-present pity: we wish to enjoy, to let ourselves go, to love, to hate and to play. Only in proportion as this hollow, objectless will is over-

come by something higher, is ethical insight possible. All else is mere philosophy of light-mindedness, sophistry of impulse, scepticism of passion. Goethe once said:

> " . . . In this thy inward storm and outer conflict
> This lesson thou must learn, though hard it be;
> From that stern force which binds each earthly being,
> Thyself must conquer if thou wilt be free."

Only those few who have fully understood and carried out that hard lesson have scaled the heights of liberty, whence there is an outlook over life; heights where the truths may be seen and proclaimed which unfailingly submit all individual action to the welfare of the soul and the ordering of the whole. And those few, in as far as they appeared before CHRIST, thought in anticipation what He fulfilled, and thus prepared for His advent; and in as far as they came after Him, with wonderful unanimity and out of the richest experience of life, they recognised His message as the only solution, and unfolded its deepest meaning in its every aspect.

Is it not a truly tragical phenomenon that those very people who to-day vaunt "free thought" against Christian tradition should be so blind to the fact that in this tradition alone perfectly "free" thought finds voice, and that the conscious and unconscious dependence of thought on subjective conditions becomes the stronger the more the subject is thrown on his own resources alone?

In this sense, may not the ethical incompetence of the unfree and isolated individual, and the supreme authority of CHRIST, be really demonstrated scientifically according to the Theory of Knowledge?

We have only to point to the incontestable fact that knowledge of this kind has certain definite preliminary inner conditions which are perfectly fulfilled only by him who can say of himself: "I have overcome the world!"

Truly it is one of those fatal abstractions (so numerous in our civilisation since the eighteenth century) to suppose that *reason*—objective thinking—is a capacity dwelling in man utterly apart from the rest of his organism, a direct reflection, as it were, in the midst of the subject of objective truths and universal claims. And yet Mephistopheles rightly says in the broadest sense:

> "Calling it reason, he uses it alone
> To be more bestial than any beast!"

This means that until a man has attained a high degree of mastery over his desires and passions, his reason is no more than the Leporello who makes the opportunities for Don Juan—and also places at his disposal the requisite philosophy. Antiquity, which demanded of the true philosopher a strict term of asceticism and imposed stern vows on the discipline of wisdom before he was deemed worthy and capable of penetrating even to the outworks of profound truths—antiquity knew better than the modern world how many hard-won victories over sensuality, passion and sloth go to make men capable of thinking and judging really independently of their own subjective conditions. It is curious that this age of ours, which cannot do enough in the way of tracing mental processes back to material processes, has nevertheless no eyes for the fundamental dependence of the

individual reason on the excitations and exigencies of sense. *We do not see it because we do not want to see it*—for such insight would be fatal to that glorification and authority of the individual reason, which we proudly regard as the supreme achievement of modern times.

Schopenhauer says: "Just as a lead weight attached to a body always brings it back to the position required by the centre of gravity, so in the ordinary man the intellect is constantly drawn back to the centre of gravity of self-interest." And in another place: "For real and genuine achievements in philosophy there must be an abnormal tendency, which, contrary to the rule of human nature, sets an absolutely objective effort in the place of the subjective effort after one's own individual good, and is therefore very appositely termed 'eccentric.'"

In these two passages lies a whole Theory of Knowledge for those who desire to attain a true insight into the problems of human life. In this age of subjectivism, however, people are utterly incapable of understanding such "eccentric" standpoints. Yet there can be no question that the unstinted recognition of this want of freedom on the part of our own reason is the one and only way by which to come to reason, *i.e.* by means of a superior wisdom to raise our own thought above subjective bias, thus purifying and educating it. I once heard a homo-sexualist expound his ethical and religious views. They were nothing but the reflection of his perverse impulses; but he regarded them as the outcome of his thought! And since the modern world referred him to his poor individual reason in final

appeal, the unfortunate man was in the same position as Münchhausen, who had to pull himself out of a bog by his own pigtail. No doubt it is wholesome and necessary to instil in man the feeling that the higher power, the voice of GOD, makes itself heard in the depths of his inmost personality, in his inmost reason, and in his own conscience. The Church herself has laid a deep foundation for this personal conscience. *Quidquid fit contra conscientiam ædificat ad gehennam!* said the Lateran Council—whoever acts against the conscience is a builder of hell! But this individual conscience needs constant correction, a continual rousing and confirming by devout comparison with the sacred and tested truths whose representative it is. Nowadays everyone has his own private watch and directs himself according to its readings; but what would happen if he never regulated it by the certified normal time of the observatories, but set its hands by all sorts of personal speculations, impressions, and requirements? This is the essential fact about conscience, that here we have something *impersonal*, correcting our subjective bias, making itself heard in our inmost self, and giving pause to our free will. For the protection, then, of this sacred thing must we not constantly compare the pronouncements of our conscience with a consecrated tradition of what is genuine and true, standing as supreme authority above our individual judgment? Otherwise is there not a grave danger lest our lower being falsify our conscience, and our sensuous personality reduce the spiritual to silence?[1]

[1] Tolstoy rightly says: "In these days life is no longer directed by conscience—conscience accommodates itself to life!" But this is inevitable once the individual no longer recognises a higher authority to keep his con-

It is interesting to note how careful and conscientious people now are, in scientific and technical matters, to eliminate all possible disturbing influences in their investigations and statements—whereas in the most supremely difficult and responsible sphere, in questions of the philosophy and conduct of life, they are quite content to think and judge without testing their own methods and without paying the slightest heed to "disturbing factors" and "sources of error." How many serious and difficult researches have been undertaken to discover, for example, a material composition for the normal standard of the metre which should protect it from all temperature variations! But everyone thinks he can establish fresh standards for the moral life, without asking himself whether they really represent something firm and immovable, or whether they will be changed by every individual caprice and interpretation, nay, whether our own subjective conditions have not interfered in the production of these standards! And the very people who clearly understand that the normal metre-measure must be made of specially rigid metal, and that it must be most carefully kept and preserved from variations of pressure and temperature, would protest vigorously if it were maintained that a certain protection through the dignity of great traditions and institutions were indispensable to the standards of the moral life!

When fixing a compass in a warship, care has to be taken above all to isolate the needle from all mag-

science alert and pure. Even Goethe expressed himself against those modern persons who desire to be so many "gods of independence": "Where have they any religious, moral and philosophical maxims which alone might offer them some security?"

netic currents which might arise from the metal hull of the ship and deflect the needle. But no one asks whether the compass in man—the individual reason which is to show us our way—is not deflected a thousand times by the disturbing forces arising from our physical nature, and whether it is not necessary constantly to correct the individual compass by fixing our gaze on the Personality who stands above all conflicting forces!

"Reason and conscience" are certainly great gifts, but they are in need of training, purification, and liberation, and of constant intercourse with a higher wisdom before the direction of our life can be entrusted to them. Faith in GOD, emancipation through CHRIST, and guidance by a great tradition, show our reason the way to the widest knowledge and save it from the bypaths and precipices of subjective folly and mere individual speculation.

Does not the subjugation of our thought to such an authority mean an unendurable renunciation of personal life and thought? No—this submission is a condition for the broadening of personal life. Only by faith in a higher wisdom does man escape from the narrow confines of his own experience and knowledge. It is precisely the most personal life which will press for guidance in the interests of its own growth, let it once perceive the immense difference in capacity for knowledge between him who is still subject to the impulses, lures and illusions of "the world" and whose views are therefore inspired from thence, and him who has passed over Golgotha. True self-knowledge will always lead to a recognition of this distinction. The insight into what is

human, "all too-human," quickens the perception for the superhuman which reveals itself from above.

By trustful reverence for that transcending power of discernment we do not profess a "blind" but a "seeing" obedience, which offers us the only true way by which we can learn—instead of teaching before we have really learnt. There is no greater hindrance to our personal development than that naïve self-conceit which pretends to give us "development of the individual," while in reality it takes from us every possibility of ever outgrowing the narrow limits of our mental horizon and our fragmentary experience of life.

. . . . . .

Let us apply the point of view just established to the problem we have before us. Probably no other ethical platform has recently been mounted by so many reformers and revolutionaries. Unfortunately all these assailants of the Christian order have not the faintest idea of the mighty competence of those standing behind this tradition, nor of the equally mighty incompetence of their own persons to undertake a transformation of values in this department. Whoever dares to lift up his voice on this subject ought to be thoroughly clear on the following main conditions of competence, and apply them to *himself* as well as to the great originators and supporters of tradition. The first is a deep and rich knowledge of life. We of to-day live in an age of experimental sciences and we hold that there can be no real knowledge without concrete observations, experiments, and tests. Why do not our empiricists apply this standpoint to the deeper problems of human life? Whence

does every abstract thinker gain his right to pronounce judgment? One has only to follow out carefully the requirements of empiricism in this sphere, to ask oneself what enormous differences exist between individuals in respect of their inward equipment for actual personal experience, to picture to oneself the immense "empirical" superiority of the really great, whose thinking takes its rise not in an acquaintance with books, but in keen suffering and fruitful inner struggles and in whose souls the "data" to be dealt with loom huge and ever present, in order immediately to realise on how wretched a foundation is built the whole self-conceit of the modern individual! "The learned," says Schopenhauer, "are those who have studied in books—the thinkers, geniuses, enlighteners of the world and liberators of the human race are those who have read direct from the pages of life itself." In the barren modern book-philosophy one sees only too clearly whither is bound mere thinking about life without contact with "experience of life." The superiority of serious Christian scholars lies in the fact that through CHRIST their thought is kept in constant touch with reality!

In requiring knowledge of life as conditional to all competence in such problems, it is not meant that a man must have passed through all sorts of filth in order to have the necessary understanding of sexual matters. Far otherwise; whoever ventures into the slavery of sensuality becomes so absorbed in its excitements and illusions that he can no longer judge objectively and truthfully of its nature and effects, but falls a victim to self-deception and delusion—except in a few instances of wonderful regeneration.

Only the free have real knowledge; and there is a kind of knowledge of life obtainable without loss of freedom, the only stipulation being that a man pronounce on these matters not from abstract thought and from a secure distance, but that he bear in himself and know face to face the great forces which come into play in the sexual life of humanity. As regards the personality of CHRIST Himself, the story of the temptation expressly indicates that there dwelt in Him not merely supernatural spirit, but human nature in all its fulness—though without being able to gain the slightest ascendancy over the soul: great agitation, a penetrating look—and then the words, "Get thee hence, Satan!" This is also expressed in the dogma of the God-man; and in the polemics of the Church against gnostic heresies it is abundantly manifest that the superiority of Christianity over mere abstract spirituality is considered as lying in its doctrine that the supreme Truth assumed flesh, lived and suffered the whole passion of life, and therefore always speaks the language of deepest experience—whereas philosophy discourses from the heights of abstract thought.[1] The fulness of nature must be

[1] Many people who have no conception of the nature of genius, and are incapable of gleaning from the words of CHRIST an all-penetrating intuition, propound the question whether anyone who has not passed through the experience of marriage can be the final authority for the moral regulation of sexual life—quite apart from the fact that CHRIST offers but very few hints of his opinion in these matters. To this we must reply: Just as Shakespeare did not need to have been a murderer to create "Macbeth," and just as Goethe could portray a Gretchen with unparalleled trueness to life without having beheld or experienced her tragedy, so genius, bearing within its soul all the elements of life's tragedy, is able, as it were, to read from these elements the whole drama of human existence without needing to have passed through all the situations which arise from these primitive tendencies. Indeed, genius knows by intuition more of life than might be learnt by experiencing the lot

present in him who is to read the forces at work in human life—but it is not essential to knowledge of life that a man fall and become guilty. Without falling, the highest genius comprehends to the uttermost the whole play of nature, and sees a thousandfold more than he who has plunged into the world of sensuous illusion and whose sight is dimmed by "the veil of Maya." And here we come to the second elementary condition of what we called "competence" in these questions: experience is indeed needful, the closest contact with the elemental forces of which the human lot is made up, but at the same time perfect *freedom* from their power must be attained, perfect mastery over their lures and delusions. Only so is a wisdom possible from whose sight nothing is hid and yet which stands above all those suggestions and promptings from the lower world which so constantly assail and dominate our thought.

If the literature of the sexual problem be considered from these points of view, two chief groups of incompetent authors may be distinguished. First, pure and

of all mankind, for what actually happens never exhausts all the possibilities of human nature and of the concatenation of events. Genius sees far more than all experience can teach; it descends into the "realm of the mothers," and learns the truth from the mothers, not from the children—*i.e.* from the first causes, not from the effects. If for the moment we neglect all that CHRIST is *more* than the greatest genius, if we consider Him only from the psychological side, and compare His insight into human affairs with that of the intuition of genius here described, it follows that He did not need to undergo marriage in order to grasp the problem of the sexes in its very root and in all its bearings. In the few words spoken and in the further injunctions concluding with the words, "He who hath ears to hear, let him hear," the whole field is covered. In many other utterances of CHRIST the profoundest conflicts of sexual life are dealt with without being mentioned; they contribute in giving to all those pronouncements that irresistible realistic power which has held its own victoriously through all the centuries in the face of endless theoretical babble.

enthusiastic souls with the best of motives, yet who produce the most tragic confusion because they lack a broad knowledge of human nature ; these are simple transparent characters without conflicting tendencies and without strong passions—the whole complexity and exuberance of human nature does not exist in them. Their proposals do not reckon with flesh-and-blood men and thus they throw us back the deeper into the lowest bondage. Their theories are all in the air and only serve to turn us aside from any strict self-knowledge and self-discipline.

Such people are therefore the most dangerous will-o'-the-wisps, and often do far more harm than those who preach open immorality.

The other main group of "incompetents" is composed of people, who have, it is true, experience of sensual forces, but who have achieved no higher mastery—to such people may be traced that sort of sexual literature of which it can at once be said: This is no language of unfettered reason, but rather, consciously or otherwise, of sensual requirements and erotic fancies and appetites. In the case of many such writings, indeed, one feels that they merit the sub-title "An Interview with the Sexual Impulse," for they give the impression that the sexual impulse is itself delivering its opinions on the sex question, and naturally making its own claims the hub of existence.

Fénelon once said : "If men had made religion—Ah, how different they would have made it!" Yes ; and when studying the "reform" literature on the sex question one gets a glimpse of how religion and ethics will appear, once the transient ideas of anyone and everyone take the place of the great revelation

from the world of superhuman suffering and conquest. And perhaps it is in this very field that the principle of mere individualism (which the free-thinker Comte characterised as "the disease of the Western World") may be most rapidly and impressively reduced *ad absurdum*. In view of the inconceivably foolish ideas, the "arm-chair" theories, and the materialistic short-sightedness of which even pure-minded and serious persons are here guilty, once they rely entirely on their own (frequently deranged) thought and their own very fragmentary experience, men will be driven finally to a fundamental "critique of individual reason"—especially when the unconscious after-effects of tradition have still further ceased to operate.

"Trust not to every spirit, but prove the spirits," says the apostle. With that end in view the author of the present work has prefaced his statement with the above fundamental aspects of the case for the proving of spirits. From the very nature of the problems concerned he derives these conditions of competence: a thorough knowledge of the real life-forces and an incorruptible freedom of the spirit in face of their attractions. These conditions are perfectly fulfilled *only* in the personality of CHRIST, and less perfectly in the great saints of the early Church. Whosoever, therefore, would tread safely and give reliable counsel in these weighty and responsible matters, must first learn and hear in deep reverence from them, before asking that others should listen to and learn from him. Too well we know the curious smile which spreads over the faces of many people at the mention of "saints." But may not this smile

be compared to the way in which the animals in the fable smiled at man for walking upright instead of creeping on all fours? Yes, the saints dared to step forward upright where most people still, alas, go on all fours! And the occasional extravagances due to the craving of their souls for freedom should be most readily forgiven them by those who are otherwise so ready to pardon all in a man or woman of genius.[1]

This much is certain: whoever means to come to grips with the sex-problem (even though it be only on the educational side), and not merely to dally with it from a literary point of view, cannot leave the saints out of account. Goethe himself had to put the crucial words of his deepest drama of humanity into the mouths of holy figures: "The outlook here is free, the spirit uplifted!" The more modern humanity learns what unchecked impulse in sexual matters really means, the more it will understand afresh why the sole realistic conception of the sex-question is latent in a heroic Christianity, and why to it alone is given the mighty power which subdues demons and transforms them into ministering spirits.

The appreciation of tradition exhibited in the above preface has been warmly attacked in various reviews of the first German edition of this book. But in no case was any serious attempt made to call in question the psychological and epistemological standpoints by which the author has tried to demonstrate the

[1] Those for whom saintliness is synonymous with flight from the world are reminded that among the greatest saints there were some who lived in wedlock and had children. Saintliness does not mean flight from the world, but uncompromising independence towards the world. This firm standpoint admits of the right control and realisation of all life's gifts—and of love.

incapacity of modern subjectivism and individualism in ethical questions. Many, indeed, show a correct apprehension of the sea of error into which that mass of modern writing must lead, which without a trace of reverence or humility, embarks upon themes essentially beyond the ken of an isolated individual. But they do not take warning from their apprehensions. To them are addressed the following poignant words once uttered by one to whom many souls were known :[1] "Thou knowest the wise of all the centuries and their teaching. But none of their systems satisfy thee, rather art thou ready of wit in perceiving and revealing each weak spot. I wager the great prospect of human follies and mistakes cherished by the greatest minds of all time inspires in thee the lively conviction that *error is the inevitable fate of man when left to himself.* Yet I lose the wager! The criticism with which thou dost censure living and dead serves to give thee a sense of thy mental power and thine own superiority over them all. Feeling that thou sayest: The power of knowledge lies nevertheless in man—meaning, of course, in thyself. Thou forgettest that all before and beside thee have thought and said just as thou, without—as thou thyself maintainest—there being truth in their utterance. Will it be otherwise in thy case? No, indeed—yet art thou well persuaded that it will! And if one says to thee: Man must be taught from above, believe thou on Him who hath said: 'I am the light of the world,' then thou art insulted because thy all-conquering mental power is called in question. Mayhap thou makest answer:

[1] *Selbsttäuschungen*, by J. B. Hirscher, Freiburg i. B. 1863.

Has anyone of distinction ever believed on Him? Let the common herd who cannot think for themselves flock after Him! And all the while there followeth on thy heels others who will set down all the results of thy proud thought in the long list of erudite and well-devised foolishness."

CHAPTER II

THE PRESENT SITUATION

THE growing laxity and indiscipline of the present generation in the sphere of sex illustrates the fate which must await any civilisation which neglects the development of will and conscience in favour of a merely material and intellectual culture. This neglect of character is all the more serious since modern society, with its temptations and distractions, makes a continually increasing appeal to the material side of man's nature. In reality the outstanding feature of our modern civilisation and its main motive power is neither more nor less than the elaborate cultivation of the material side of life. The excessive development of outer needs and pleasures is the real cause of what has been called the "sexual hypertrophy" of our age. At the present day man's *material desires* are set in the very centre of life, and this materialism finds its natural expression in the abnormal shamelessness with which modern men and women demand the gratification of their erotic desires as if it were the main end of life. Every erotic whim and perversity insists upon receiving recognition and encouragement.

I wish, at the very outset of this work, to call attention to these social causes of sexual laxity and oversensibility, with the object of fixing the limits within

which any attempts at an elevation of morality and an education of the young in sexual matters can be effective in our present social atmosphere. The main educational factor is, and always will be, the spirit of the age. If this spirit is one of concentration upon outward things, it will raise up a thousand voices urging the new generation towards self-indulgence and materialism, and in this case there must be an extraordinary educational force to be of any avail as a counter-influence.

What can the educator do, given the conditions of modern life? How can home and school resist, at any rate in some degree, the physical, moral and social dangers which threaten to overwhelm the prematurely developed boys and girls of to-day, destined to live in the midst of a civilisation the very atmosphere of which is charged with sex attraction?

The desire to answer these questions was the main motive in the undertaking of this work. Then arose the necessity of laying a good foundation for the main ethical positions which were set up for the guidance of the educator; and thus the theoretical part of the book became enlarged in scope.

We live in an age in which it is no longer possible merely to hand on generally accepted truths. The educator has to confront a chaos of conflicting opinions, and must find an answer to the great question: What is Truth? He must first make sure of his *goal*.

Thus we cannot separate sexual education from sexual ethics. It is of absolutely decisive importance whether the fundamental view of life which one accepts is of an educative character—that is making a strong

ethical demand and exercising an elevating influence —or whether it is "soft," and consciously or unconsciously encourages men and women to yield to instinct and passion. Those who believe in the energetic subjection of the sex instinct to higher spiritual aims will not be moved in their educational work by at all the same spirit, nor will they employ the same methods, as those who follow the popular modern doctrine of "living one's life out," and whose highest educational aim is merely to prevent premature or unhealthy sexual manifestations.

In the first portion of this book we shall attempt to lay down some leading ethical principles applicable to sexual morality, and at the same time we shall pay especial attention to the criticisms which various modern thinkers have brought forward against the Christian view of marriage.

. . . . . .

It is well known that Nietzsche charged David Strauss with having uncritically retained the traditional morality and its values, while rejecting all religious dogma. He pointed out that Strauss' ethics was neither more nor less than the ancient Christian system, liberated from theology. "Heal us! Blow upon us! Let the soft winds of spring thaw us," cried Nietzsche, and straightway applied the principle of freedom of judgment and the absolute supremacy of the individual intellect to the sphere of ethics. We all of us know how much remained of the whole life-wisdom of the past after this examination by an abstract arm-chair thinker!—no more *can* remain when the mere intellect is used to test things which rest upon a deep and wide experience of real life.

At first Nietzsche was looked upon as a solitary phenomenon, an isolated and eccentric figure. Then it was seen that he had done no more than pursue spiritual and intellectual individualism to its logical end, and men began to follow him and to understand him as the inexorable and instructive fulfiller of certain modern tendencies.

The sphere of sexual ethics, is, of all the departments of life, that in which the old ideals and demands have undergone the most extensive disintegration. Men have sinned in all ages, but up to the present moral bankruptcy has not been made the basis of a "new morality"—guilt was felt to be such and described as such. It has remained for our own age to make a new morality out of uncontrolled frivolity and loose passion, and to obliterate, in the sexual sphere, every distinction between strength of character and its opposite. On reading a great deal of our modern literature, one finds, indeed, that everything in our sexual life which has previously been considered sacred and essential to human dignity is contested and turned upside down. One is not infrequently reminded of the witches' song in Macbeth:

> "Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
> Hover through the fog and filthy air."

What then is the essence of the "old ethics" as applied to sex? It does not despise the sensuous feelings, as is so frequently assumed, nor does it aim at eradicating them from our nature; its sole object is the complete subordination of the sensuous and natural man to the needs of the spiritual man.

As a necessary consequence of this position it demands the absolute rejection of all sex relationships outside marriage. The reason for this is not that the highest emotions of love and the highest mutual loyalty and responsibility are not thinkable without the outer form ; but this form is sacred, and follows from the essential nature of Christianity, because its earnestness and its solemn dedication possess the greatest educational value for human nature and afford the greatest outward protection against the impulses of the sensuous world and the glamour of irresponsible feeling.

The prohibition of all sex relationships outside marriage is in reality an essential step towards the emancipation of the Eros, because in setting up sacred forms for the union of men and women we connect sexual love with all the higher interests and feelings of humanity. Long before the awakening of sexual instincts, children should become thoroughly accustomed in their whole inner life always to think of the union of a man and a woman as a lifelong tie of fate and education.

Looking backwards down the centuries, we find an overwhelming consensus of opinion in favour of this interpretation of the Christian attitude towards the sex question. It was men with the profoundest knowledge of human nature who perceived that in this sphere in particular the fixed and definite form is an absolutely indispensable means for the preservation and strengthening of our spiritual nature. They knew the irresponsibility of sexual instincts and the whole force of sensuous illusion, and knew the depth to which man falls when he is released from all

strong forces of order and restraint and delivered over to the elementary power of his sexual needs and passions.

In order to give the reader some idea of the nature of the modern reversal of values in this sphere, we shall give a few examples of what has been said (and that in full earnest) by various representatives of the modern tendency in their campaign against the traditional ideas. It is not difficult to perceive that most of these suggestions for "sexual reform" proceed from women writers: the feminine—that is the "all-too-feminine"—tendency is only too obvious. The subjective element is placed above all objective order and would exalt its transitory moods to the position of highest authority. This is usually called "self-realisation," the "enhancement of life," or "living one's life out"—quite vague phrases which are very wisely not clearly defined by those who are wont to employ them.[1] All discipline and restraint is scoffed at as "ascetism." In the face of this sort of thing we should expect men to show that they are men. We see, however, that a great number of modern men receive this weak and thoughtless emotionalism with admiration and applause, and enrol themselves under the leadership of women who appear to have completely lost their heads and who seem intoxicated with foolish eroticism and short-

[1] Such catchwords as these can best be met by asking the question: In what does our real life and its realisation consist? Possibly that which appears to bring about an enhancement of life leads, in reality, to decadence and disintegration. Possibly the true concentration and elevation of our life-force has its own deep secrets which cannot be fathomed by those who are still wearing the "Veil of Maya." Can it be that the true realisation of our life is indicated in the words *ego sum vita?*

sighted humanitarianism. And yet from the earliest times down to the present day men have been the makers of laws and the builders of states; they have endeavoured to make individual irresponsibility subordinate to universal interests, and by means of firm decrees have sought to control unbridled subjective impulse—they have realised, in a greater degree than have women, the elementary power of natural instincts, and have known by personal experience what struggling human nature really needs.

Manhood means discipline, and the old ethical tradition has stood for such discipline over against all feminine emotional subjectivism and all youthful worship of merely natural instincts. The will, the backbone of all personal life, cannot be developed except in such an atmosphere of discipline. Moreover, genuine erotic feeling itself cannot develop except upon the basis of such a development of will-power!

There are, indeed, psychological reasons for this revolt of the subjective element in the sphere of sexual feelings. The man of to-day is very poorly educated for the deeper art of love, and is moreover inwardly impoverished by the strain and overwork of modern life. For this reason he has lost all his authority in matters of love in the eyes of the woman, and thus we have the subjective element without any objective check; its fruits are to be seen in the extraordinary reversal of values to which we have referred. But the time has now come when thoughtful men should consider what standpoint they must adopt in these matters. In the first place, they are called upon to emphasize the subjective import-

ance of objective order. It should not appear as if the old ethical position entirely neglected the interests of the subject out of consideration for social order.

This cult of the subjective is peculiarly prominent in the writings of the famous Swedish authoress, Ellen Key.[1] Her "new morality" consists essentially in the elimination of *loyalty* from the sphere of sex relations and the liberation of erotic feeling from every other consideration. The fundamental principle of the new order is that love and marriage must always coincide; when erotic passion fades, or when a new love swims into the horizon, then a marriage has lost its justification and must give way to new relationships. The party who is "left in the lurch" must accept the position as natural and inevitable. The Christian doctrine of loyalty is asserted to be a hindrance to the fullest development of life, because it prevents men and women from fully realising all their possibilities of happiness in the sphere of love.

There is quite a widespread opinion among modern sociologists to the effect that monogamy will have to give way to relationships of a less permanent character, owing to the increasing individualisation and differentiation of the men and women of to-day, which will make it less and less likely that the paths of evolution of two personalities will run parallel for a lifetime. It is entirely forgotten that highly developed personalities form deeper bonds with their fellowmen than do more superficial natures.

[1] Some of her works have recently been published in English, and have been warmly taken up by some of the more advanced English Feminists.

From this point it is only a step to the so-called "Right to Motherhood," which many advanced reformers claim for all women who do not actually marry—the tie between mother and child is to be the sole legal bond.[1]

Representatives of the traditional moral order are apt to view such opinions as these with an almost excessive horror. For, after all, if these modern errors are to be refuted, it is much better that they should be pushed to their logical extreme than that misleading ideas should be propagated without their real nature being adequately exposed. Many people have to-day cut themselves loose from the traditional spiritual foundations of life without in the least realising all that really rests upon these foundations. But when someone steps forward and carries the new situation to its logical conclusion, they are horrified, and hasten to deny their own spiritual offspring. Such people are the Girondists of the modern moral revolution. They are far more dangerous than the open Jacobins.

Expressions of opinion such us we have brought forward are also very instructive in showing us how impossible it is to attempt to retain the old morality

[1] There is, of course, in England too, a large and apparently increasing movement towards the abolition of the monogamous marriage. *The Freewoman* publishes almost every week articles and letters suggesting various "sexual reforms" which are altogether antagonistic to marriage. The following quotations are from a recent number (July 4th, 1912): "Loosening of the marriage tie makes for the extension of mental growth. It is, therefore, good. Half or more of the marital evils are due to the idea of the permanence of the union. . . . Man has learnt that where the highest development is desired there must be a great degree of individual freedom." "Marriage is an institution whose dissolution is already at hand." The evidence given before the Divorce Commission also revealed a very large body of opinion opposed to the strictly monogamous marriage.

while at the same time giving up its religious foundation.

Those who wish to place the old religious view of life on the shelf are obsessed by a great illusion, an illusion due to their remoteness from real life; they believe that men will bow to the moral necessities of social life with no motive other than an enlightened sense of social interest. They do not fully realise what extraordinary sacrifices the individual may be called upon to make in favour of the moral order. Such sacrifices will be made for the sake of higher goods, but not out of a mere pious resignation to the ordinances of social morality. Individuals peculiarly strong in the social sense, or of an especially dispassionate temperament, will possibly be able to make this sacrifice, but the majority, when the wider horizon disappears, will finally act according to St. Paul's saying: "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die."

The proclamation of the "right to sex-life" is the inevitable psychological consequence of numbers of people being deprived of any deeper inward reasons for continence and self-sacrifice. Many of these will be too logical or too honourable to continue in the old moral grooves through a mere fear of doing anything unusual. They feel that the non-religious social morality involves a crucifixion without a resurrection—and this they cannot endure. And it is just as well that they should rebel, for our abstract reformers would never otherwise understand that they had overestimated human nature, and that the moral discipline and social education of man is an infinitely more difficult task than they have been

wont to believe. Then at last they will begin to judge the great cultural achievement of Christianity with more modesty and more justice!

A further governing factor in the "new morality" is an uncontrolled blind sympathy. This is another indication of the one-sided predominance of the subjective element. In order to remedy the social misery of the unmarried mother and her children, it is demanded that all distinction between the married and the unmarried mother should be obliterated. All motherhood is to be recognised as sacred. Masculine writers—such as Forel—have also come forward in support of this claim. Forel even goes so far as to describe the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate motherhood as "immoral."

CHAPTER III

FORM AND FREEDOM

LET us now turn to those objections to traditional ethics which are based upon what is called the "progress of individual freedom." For the young, thirsting for liberty, such arguments have a great attraction. Is not rigid form the antithesis to freedom? And in the sphere of these utterly personal experiences, should not all hampering restraints be done away with?

First of all, we may ask: What is freedom, and what sort of freedom is desired? How is true, personal freedom attained and maintained? If freedom for caprice and passion, for desire and lust is meant, then indeed rigid form is enemy to the death of freedom. If the meaning is freedom for the moral and spiritual man and for his need of complete control over the varying allurements of the senses and over his own physical conditions, then rigid form is the true bulwark of freedom, the sole guarantee for and the surest means of attaining true personal life. For the retention of the rigid ceremonial form, with all its definite and regulated responsibilities, helps man to the fullest self-consciousness in this momentous sphere, enables him to bring his immost individuality into play, and places him beyond the reach of attack by transient allurements

and merely sensuous impulses. When confronted by critical decisions, do we not all beg for time to take counsel with our inmost self so as not to be the sport of passing moods and impressions? Do we not feel that only thus can a really free and *personal* action be committed? Similarly, in the realm of sex, to be bound to the rigid form of marriage is of essential importance for our realisation of true freedom of action. If it rested with our "individual" decision to contract unions outside this permanent life-compact, or to dissolve this compact at will, all too soon we should fall a prey to changing erotic attacks and passions, the more fatal to our mental balance the more they arose from quite impersonal sexual impulses and sensuous stimuli. In the face of these facts, rigid form represents, as it were, the firm and lasting ego. It deprives the individual of his freedom of action and hampers him most strongly precisely in that region of life where he is most in danger of making momentous decisions profoundly affecting another life at a time when he is not in his most responsible condition. The weight and solemnity of the external union symbolises to the individual the magnitude of the internal union, the intensity and full scope of which still lies outside his experience. In the realm of sex, momentary impulses and passions chiefly tend to rob us of insight and perspective and to isolate us both from our best and most personal self and from the general order of life. It is in this realm, therefore, that the individual must be warned most strongly how far-reaching are his actions, how much the permanence and rigidity of the bond signifies for the strengthening of his own character,

and how its consecrated permanence is therefore no mere external compulsion but simply the outward expression of inner facts. The civil form of marriage thus represents the external consequences of a sexual union and emphasizes the external responsibilities. The religious sacrament of holy matrimony, on the other hand, suggests the illimitable significance of this relation in all its gravity for the whole inner man.

The Swedish writer Ellen Key (translations of whose works are now having a considerable circulation in Great Britain) made this specious plea for "free" love to the rising generation: "He who feels strongly enough does not ask himself whether he has a right to that feeling—he is so enlarged by his love that he feels the life of humanity is enlarged by him." But how could the life of mankind ever be "enlarged" by a reckless passion? Complete yielding is always a loss of vital energy for the individual as well as for humanity. Uncontrolled power is a sign of exhaustion and leads to exhaustion. And those who yield to their feelings at the cost of the fidelity and responsibility which hold all human society together, will always introduce into their erotic relationships the curse of disloyal selfishness, and will see their life henceforward marred by the same want of principle which has led them to snatch at their so-called happiness. Morality is no artificial external law; its threats and its promises only warn us of the *actual* consequences of things, consequences which bring all high-souled imaginings into the dust.

The passage quoted above asks nothing less than

that human personality shall be delivered up for better or for worse to every strong erotic excitement, that man shall be made the abject slave of his instincts, and that sex passion shall be preached as if we were only in the world for the sake of the sexual impulse, and its excited images were the only real things, all other aims and objects in life being nought but phantoms and pale shadows. All serious religions and philosophies have taught exactly the contrary: they speak of the "Veil of Maya," of the illusions and obfuscations by means of which the senses lure man into their bondage and make him disloyal to his spiritual destiny—that destiny which a natural life must be made to subserve but not to surpass. Ellen Key represents that man's judgment as to right and wrong in his erotic passions is nothing but an external moral servitude. But in truth in the conscience there is expressed above all the fact that man is not merely a sexual being and an erotic process, but first and foremost a spiritual personality with ineradicable spiritual and moral requirements. These needs, by their very nature, far transcend the craving for erotic pleasure, and reach their zenith in that sanctified *caritas*, which imparts even to erotic life a new depth and intensity as compared with that which attaches to the reckless selfishness of passion.

The ceremonial and lifelong monogamous form is therefore no more than the sole worthy expression of the very fact that man is more than an erotic process. Man cannot abandon his higher measure of responsibility, his strength of mind and spiritual liberty, for the delights of the moment, without

denying the whole dignity of his manhood. Conscience is the language of this need for unity—the language of GOD.

All the modern attacks on monogamous marriage clearly reveal the most widespread danger of our time, namely *isolated specialisation*. This is far more dangerous in the practical sphere than it is in the theoretical: it involves the detachment of individual action from a unified total conception, in which all the needs and conditions of human life are met in proper order. Men live from hand to mouth and act from caprice or passing impression, but not according to a wide and deep understanding. In the individual life, if subordinate nerve-centres get detached and become independent of the central nervous system we talk of illness and decline. This point of view is valid for our civilisation as a whole: the struggles of erotic impulses for emancipation ought not to be regarded as evidence of power and health, but as symptoms of nervous disease; they indicate the breaking up of human unity, the detachment of certain soul and nerve spheres from that central control which alone adjusts us to the order of life as a whole and represents the permanent interests of our character. It may doubtless be asserted: *He who breaks away from the whole and resigns his responsibilities, himself ceases to be a whole;* the economy of his own personality goes to pieces; in his own life, too, he becomes a victim of his transient instincts and of his servile indulgence of self.

Looked at from this point of view, the theory of "living one's life out" is simply a phenomenon of

morbidity and decline—a crumbling of man's inner unity, a surrender of the spiritual personality to the world of external allurements, a severance of action from a universal view of life in which all individual and social consequences of our action or inaction are taken into account. Thus free love is not healthy. The truly healthy love owns controlling bonds and is glad to be closely linked with those powers of the soul which are holier and deeper than all erotic passion ; it is governed by that higher serving and cherishing love, in comparison with which all mere erotic indulgence is no more than an utterly incomplete expression. The institution of indissoluble monogamy, seemingly so stern, is therefore, in reality, crystallised love and care. It signifies the enrolment of our sensuous love in a more highly developed type of self-forgetful devotion.

The basis of this higher selflessness, however, is the feeling of responsibility which never allows the erotic ecstasy of two people to become the sole controlling force, but always takes account of the totality of life and directs all separate actions from that standpoint.

Whoever wants to see and judge rightly in these questions must clearly understand, in the first place, that ordered form and personal liberty are not opposed but closely associated things. Form is the stronghold in which our inmost personality attains to full vindication of its demands and ideals, and is safe from the control of passing impulses. When we desire to grant liberty we must always ask first of all: Whom and what do we make free? And whoever pictures to himself in this way what

will and must happen in a society in which sexual relationships are placed at the mercy of the individual alone, without restraining form and morality, will know that it is not the great love which will be free, but our petty passion, our intoxication of the senses, our craving for change, our instability, our transient passion, our faithless egoism.[1] Numbers of people of a weak disposition, who are to-day saved by the rigid and sacred form from the tyranny of the lower powers within themselves, and constantly reminded of their better selves, will then come to curse the freedom which has made them slaves. Only think of it: all those men, who make off when the first blush of love fades, or when the wife has aged early from heavy travail and lost her pristine charm, are allowed, nay bidden, by Ellen Key to seek new erotic refreshment! And think, too, of all those frivolous and capricious women, eager to experience something fresh, for whom every interesting influence would mean a new lot in life! In this respect, American conditions give a slight foretaste of what must come when all those controlling forms are broken down which come between a man and the dictates of his passions and the illusions of his erotic sensibility, helping him to that restraint which

[1] We do not overlook the fact that there may also be very deep and serious reasons for separation—we are merely demonstrating the effects which the annulling of the sanctified form must have, and has been proved to have, on the lower and weaker side of human nature. Nor do we hold that civil law, with its iron compulsion, ought to make divorce too difficult and force the indissolubility of wedlock on those who have lost all touch with a deeper religious view of life. The state ought to insist on certain intervals and place certain restrictions on frivolity and changeableness—*but the religious bodies should uphold indissolubility*, which has sprung from their deepest convictions.

he ever desires with the best part of his being, and of which he will never repent. Ellen Key does not, of course, want every passing passion to be a ground for divorce—only a great love should justify that. But is it not an absurd anomaly that she should make the persons chiefly concerned free to decide as to the quality of their dawning feeling? As if it were not inherent in every sensuous passion to make a man lose his head and to lead him on with promises of permanence and immutability! Schopenhauer's observations on this subject will never be out of date, and are earnestly recommended to all the adherents of the new erotic religion.

The modern exponents of a "new morality"—Ellen Key for example—are all unfortunately suffering from a dangerous lack of knowledge of human nature, or from complete indifference to what the vast majority of people would make of "individual freedom" in sexual matters. They do not see that the freedom which they would bestow would be all to the advantage of the lower impulses and would foster their rank growth. In this fashion there would be no room left for the exercise and development of the higher. They are always dreaming of a great "everlasting love" to which all must be permitted and which needs no outward constraints. And who can doubt the existence of such great and inherently perpetual feelings? But how rarely, even in happy marriages, do we find two people paired together who have the same strength and depth of erotic feeling! No, in the regulation of sexual life one cannot rely in the least degree upon the binding force of those highest and rarest phenomena of feeling; but one has

to take into account that the vast majority of individuals are only too capable of inconstancy in purely sexual affairs, because their love is highly impersonal and is determined rather by the senses than by the spirit ; it can be restrained and ennobled only by that training in constancy and responsibility, sympathy and patience, which emanates from the consecrated and steadfast ideal of the lifelong union. Only a small minority of people are capable of the great love of a Tristan and Isolde, and the representatives of this minority are so scattered that their encounter is the rarest chance. Innumerable marriages have their Tristan but no Isolde, or Isolde without Tristan, and most can show neither a Tristan nor an Isolde. And we must bear in mind these concrete defects and weaknesses of human nature, if we are to understand why Christianity has laid such extraordinary stress on the sanctity of lifelong monogamy. It is therefore no mere chance that even freethinking men with experience of life have positively and unanimously maintained that freedom in this respect is entirely detrimental to civilisation and must irrevocably expose people to sensual thraldom. August Comte, for example, advocates indissoluble monogamy, observing : " Our hearts are so fickle that society has to intervene in order to keep in check all the vacillation and caprice which would otherwise cause human existence to degenerate into a series of aimless and unworthy experiments."

These words of Comte's should be taken to heart by all those who believe that the facilitation of divorce would result in an increased number of happy marriages. On the contrary, the sort of people who will

lightly separate from one another because their patience and sense of social duty is subjected to trial, will more and more fall under the dominion of their own moods, selfish fancy, and egoism. In this fashion, they become increasingly incapable of entering into happy social relationships ; it is their curse and their natural punishment that they slip further and further away from the happiness they pursue, and to obtain which they abandon all deeper sense of duty.

Goethe himself (though the moderns delight to quote him as the champion of every sort of liberty) grew to regard marriage with increasing strictness and seriousness, and to have the greatest reverence for the sanctity of the form, precisely because he did not pronounce judgment from some abstract height but from a deep experience of life. His *Wahlverwandtschaften*, in which the violation of marriage, even in thought, is punished,[1] seems to be a direct protest against the free ideas of the Romanticists. And Goethe intensified this protest more and more as the years passed, although he thereby exposed and condemned much in his own life and doings. The pastor's words in the *Wahlverwandtschaften* doubtless express his own opinion :

"Whoever I find attacking the state of marriage, or undermining by word or deed this groundwork of all moral society, has me to reckon with. Marriage is the beginning and the summit of all civilisation. It makes the rough gentle, and it affords the most refined the best opportunity for proving their quality.

[1] Goethe himself says of this novel that it forms, "merely an illustration of CHRIST'S words: 'Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.'"

It must be indissoluble: for it brings so much happiness that all isolated unhappiness sinks by comparison into the background. And what do we mean by unhappiness? It is impatience, which attacks a man from time to time, and then he likes to think himself unhappy. Let the moment pass, and he will be thankful that what has held so long still holds. There is no adequate ground for parting. Human life is so built up of sorrows and joys that it is impossible to know how much a husband and wife may owe one another. It is an interminable debt which can only be paid in eternity. Inconvenient it may sometimes be, that I grant, and rightly so: but are we not also wedded to our conscience, which we would often fain be rid of, for it is more inconvenient than ever husband or wife could be?"

Goethe has himself told us that Reinhard, the Court preacher at Dresden, frequently expressed his surprise at the strictness of Goethe's views on marriage, as contrasted with the great freedom of his general opinions. Voss (Junior), too, in his Recollections, describes how on one occasion he was present with Goethe when *Luise* was being read aloud: when the passage about the betrothal came, the great philosopher broke into tears and exclaimed, "A holy passage," with a warmth of feeling that profoundly moved all present.

To-day there is a most unfortunate idea prevalent to the effect that the fixed monogamous marriage stands in opposition to the development of society along free lines. It is completely forgotten that true progress does not consist in securing animal freedom, but rather, through a more perfect control of the

lower self, in setting free the spiritual centre of personality. A truly free society cannot be built up except upon the broad basis of an intelligent obedience, of a voluntary subjection of the impulsivity of the individual to the fixed forms which give society its solidarity. These forms embody the experience and wisdom of the race and serve the purpose of barriers, compelling individuals to act in a manner in harmony with the general welfare of society and with the needs and rights of their neighbours.

The very freedom which we are to-day proud of, rests upon a long historical process of discipline. The wild animal passions and vagrant desires have been subjected to a measure of control, which, imperfect though it may be, has alone made a secure society possible. Man, the spirit, cannot receive freedom until man, the animal, has been harnessed.

It is no mere coincidence that in the freest country in the world, in England, there is the most highly developed system of forms and customs. Form and freedom do not really stand in opposition to one another. The wild and anti-social passions which are latent in human nature are checked and quieted by the presence of fixed forms—and it is precisely these passions which deprive us of true freedom and hence continually threaten the security and freedom of our neighbours.

If the complete freedom of the individual to do just as he likes were really the objective of our social progress, then in the sphere of law, helping oneself to whatever one wanted, would be the logical end of social progress. But what is really taking place is that all legal arrangements are tending, by means of

rigid forms and regulations, more and more towards shutting out the disturbing influence of individual egotism or eccentricity, in the interest of a harmonious working of the social system as a whole. It is my conviction that in the sphere of sex, the influence of individualism, unchecked by definite form or principle, must be as retrogressive and demoralising as is the influence of lynch justice in the sphere of law. The sexual conduct of men, like their legal conduct, needs definite forms and institutions to safeguard it from temporary whims and undisciplined desires. The individual ought not to be left entirely to himself in a department of life in which he is less completely master of himself than in any other, in which he is peculiarly liable to be swept away by the emotions of the moment, and in which the decisions he makes are so extraordinarily momentous for his own life and the lives of others.

We do not attack the principle of freedom. It is a question of a proper *balance* between the two everlasting principles of form and freedom.

Above all we are concerned with the true educational conditions of freedom. He who understands what freedom really is, will himself wish to be controlled and checked, where an absence of definite forms would expose himself and others to the danger of becoming the slaves of low impulses and blind desires, and selfish or narrow decisions, which would spread disaster in every direction. There can be no better discipline to fit men for the use of freedom and independence in every department of life, than that involved in learning continual obedience to higher principles in the sphere of sex.

The individual should train himself constantly to consider the highest aims and best interests of the community as a whole, to subordinate his own wishes and passions to the indispensable conditions of social solidarity. There could be no better way of rapidly reducing the sum total of freedom in society as a whole than by encouraging reckless freedom in a sphere of human conduct so filled with danger and far-reaching consequences as is that of sex. The writings of Ellen Key furnish a peculiarly good example of this tendency towards spurious freedom. In the name of freedom she proposes to release people from all obedience to fixed forms. At the same time she proposes no other means for restraining the whims and passions of frail humanity. She is blind to the necessity for any sort of self-mastery. It must not be forgotten that when an individual is undisciplined, his lack of self-control is not simply a matter concerning himself alone. It leads directly to the *oppression of others.* The freedom which each particular member of a community is able to enjoy depends upon the degree of self-discipline to which the *other* members have attained.

All true progress consists in strengthening the power of the higher and more permanent human feelings, in securing our actions more and more from the influence of selfishness and egotistic passion. Hence our sexual relationships should be fortified and deepened by consecrated forms. Our true motto is the couplet in the prologue to Goethe's *Faust:*

> "And all that flows unfixed and undefined
> In glimmering phantasy before the mind,
> Bid thoughts' enduring chain forever bind!"

CHAPTER IV

THE VALUE OF THE MONOGAMOUS IDEAL

(*a*) MONOGAMY AND PERSONALITY

FROM the foregoing point of view it will be obvious that the monogamous form of sex-relationship is not an institution which emphasizes the interests of the community at the cost of the individual. On the contrary it performs the special function of securing and developing the fundamental conditions of personal life; it serves to preserve the unity of human personality, extending it into the sphere of sex, and it assists men and women, in this extremely responsible department of life, to act as whole personalities and not as mere erotic fragments. Nothing so destroys living human personality and so disastrously weakens the will as the performance of actions which involve the exclusion of the deeper self. Only conscientious conduct is truly personal conduct. Every noble custom and every honourable institution which helps to secure man from the dominion of distraction, instinct, and passion, and allows expression to his true self, is therefore a pillar of personal life—in spite of all outward restraint. Here we see with peculiar clearness that the old ethic, so far from repressing personal life, has for its express object the protection of personality

against the impersonal impulse of the sex instinct. The modern advocates of an emancipated Eros fail to perceive that the granting of license to erotic passion would more than anything else deprive the inner man of freedom, making him the victim of quite impersonal impulses and instincts. Unfortunately there are to-day a large number of people, old enough to know better, who write about sexual matters and advocate sexual instruction, and yet themselves lack the most essential of all sexual knowledge —namely, the knowledge that those very same emotional experiences which they take to be in the highest degree personal (and for which, in the interests of free personality, they demand complete liberty) are, in reality, the product of the erotic illusion and glamour by which the sex instinct, working in the interests of racial preservation, seeks to dominate the free individual. Schopenhauer observed of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, that it is, in essence, a representation of the mocking triumph of the impersonal sex instinct over the rights and interests of the individual. And in reading much of the modern literature directed against the old ethic, one cannot avoid the impression that, unknown to the author, there laughs forth from its pages the mocking genius of propagation, leading the would-be independent thinker by the nose, and so deceiving him that he takes what is the merest sexual glamour for a new "religion of personality."

(*b*) THE CHILD'S RIGHT TO MONOGAMY

We have not hitherto looked at the matter from the child's point of view (although this affords us

the strongest of all the arguments in favour of the monogamous marriage) because we desired, in the first place, to employ only those reasons which were valid for *all marriages.* Nothing could be more extraordinary than the facility with which those who aim at loosening the ties of marriage ignore the child's most fundamental right—*the right to possess a mother and a father.* Here, in particular, we perceive the full inconsistency of these arm-chair reformers. They express themselves in favour of the state taking over the care of the children in order that men and women may be more at liberty in their sexual relationships, and more able to satisfy the requirements of their individuality. That is to say, for the *parents* they demand individualism and the free development of personality ; while for the *children* they advocate a governmental upbringing which would tend in the highest degree towards uniformity and impersonal development, thus injuring, in the deepest possible way, the very cause in the name of which all their theories are advanced ! Only people whose thoughts were entirely remote from the realities of life could fail to realise that the small and intimate circle of the family—which guards and develops such manifold and deep feelings, and thus most simply and most naturally prepares for social life—must afford to human personality a much richer and more secure development than can be provided by the best possible public educational institution. For after all the latter has no power to produce the incomparable formative influences which attach to the closest of all natural relationships, with all its wealth of motives and experiences. Those who

attack the institution of the family in the interests of free love and the supposed freer development of personality should learn that it is precisely upon the firm foundation of the family that the education of men and women of personality rests—not because all parents are good educators, but because family life, *as such*, liberates and brings into play spiritual forces which would remain undeveloped under any system of state upbringing.

The monogamous family being, for these reasons, the permanent basis of all higher social and personal life, every really earnest and concrete view of life will make a special point of defending marriage against all individualistic attacks. And this involves the condemnation of all those movements which have for their object the recognition of sexual relationships in which two people secure their own pleasure at the expense of the most fundamental conditions for the spiritual development of their offspring. It is certainly true that in many cases serious division between man and wife may render the life of the home injurious to the children ; at the same time even very painful impressions and experiences of this kind are often of greater value for a child's inner growth than an education in the mass. Moreover, if the conditions became unbearable, there is the possibility of a temporary or permanent spatial separation of husband and wife.

(*c*) THE SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MONOGAMY

It has recently been asserted that lifelong monogamy is by no means to be looked upon as a

permanent institution but represents merely that form of family life which corresponds with the age of private property, and that with an alteration in the economic structure of society it will give way to other forms. Is it true that the monogamous ethic stands for a certain phase in the evolution of society and carries in itself no absolute values?

This question cannot be examined apart from the more general question: Is there an absolute morality at all, or is all morality no more than a temporary accommodation to the conditions of a given age? Within the compass of this chapter we cannot possibly deal with the matter adequately, but we should like to point out that there are certain permanent conditions without which our social life cannot attain perfection. These conditions are independent of all economic changes. The deepening of the sense of responsibility, the education of the individual in self-discipline, the development of patience and charity, the overcoming of selfishness, the preservation of the emotional life from disintegration and from subjection to passing moods—these are elements of the inner life which may be described as *absolute and permanent conditions of all higher social culture*, incapable of being reversed by any economic alterations. Indeed economic progress is itself closely connected with social progress as a whole, for economic security and success depend ultimately upon the intimacy and reliability of our social co-operation. Every economic change which neglects these fundamental conditions stands self-condemned. For the socio-ethical consideration of the absolute moral value of sexual relationships the following question is

therefore decisive: Which type of relationship is best adapted for the deepening and strengthening of our whole social life; which is best able, in every relationship of life, to produce the maximum amount of sense of responsibility, of self-denial and of self-sacrifice, while working most effectively against all undisciplined selfishness and changeful frivolity? When we consider the question from this point of view there can be no doubt whatever that monogamy, on account of its *social and educational value*, belongs to the permanent content of all higher social civilisation, and that true social progress will tighten the bond of marriage rather than loosen it. The more the spiritual and moral factors in social health become properly understood and valued, and the more social reform is looked at from an *educational* point of view, the more indispensable will the monogamous ideal appear. The family has been called the cell of the social life: it fulfils this function not only in a physical and economic sense; it is also the centre of all human training for social life, that is, for responsibility, sympathy, self-control, mutual toleration and mutual education. And it fills this central place precisely because it is lifelong and indissoluble, and because, through its permanence, the community of life in the family becomes deeper, firmer, and more manifold than in any other human relationship. One might say that the lifelong monogamous marriage is the conscience of all human social life. What social life is and what it demands is here most profoundly experienced; here, in the consecrated form of this most intimate and responsible bond, our human responsibilities are most

sharply fixed and most clearly exhibited, so that marriage becomes a sacred symbol for the whole social life. It serves to communicate an increase of earnestness and responsibility to every other less serious type of human relationship. Here, too, unreliable, superficial people, and those with foolish abstract ideas, are set in such a definite relationship to real life that they are compelled to gather themselves together with all the concentration and earnestness of which they are capable. And as we have already pointed out, all this is only *apparently* opposed to the development and enrichment of sexual feeling. In reality the training of the deepest sentiments of duty is the only protection for the deepest emotions of love: *Der Ernst, der heilige, er macht allein das Leben des Lebens wert.*

Indissoluble marriage is the greatest of all the educational forces making for human earnestness. It is totally false to believe, because our economic life exhibits an increasing tendency in favour of easily dissoluble relationships, that our marriage customs and laws must be made subject to the same principle. No: society would be destroyed by the transitory nature of human connections, if above all this shifting ground there did not stand the ideas of permanent duty, gratitude and care, ideas which are already reawakening and seeking for new forms of expression. It is in the definite form of the monogamous marriage that the great idea of mutual responsibility will always find its sacred fire. This indispensable idea would disappear from our life if the most intimate of all human relationships came to be regulated by the principle of "short notice," as if

it were a mere business contract. It is the moral condemnation of this sort of laxity which holds the whole of society together, and consolidates and consecrates the desire for loyalty and responsibility in every sphere of life.

It has been put to the credit of the ancient cult of spirits, with its reverence for ancestors, that it acted as a bond, attaching the naturally thoughtless and undisciplined man of the period to his fellow-men, and filling his life with the new idea of a permanent duty. The lifelong monogamous marriage performs a similar function in a much more effective manner. It is an educational and social force turning the changeable and inconstant natural man towards ideals of consistency and discipline. Free and temporary sex relationships are a training-ground for the opposite tendencies; they have the socially disastrous effect of causing a man to regard his fellow-beings flippantly and insincerely, and simply from the selfish standpoint of his own indulgence. "Indulgence kills the spirit," said Goethe. Certainly all indulgence is degrading which is carried on without the assent of our best self and without the true spirit of love, or which makes us reject our old conscience and invent a new one in which we cannot believe, unless we deceive or stupefy ourselves.

In conclusion I must mention another social consideration which tells in favour of the fixed form of monogamous marriage. From the point of view of chivalry, of the protection of the weak, it is binding upon us to honour and to preserve the outward institution of marriage, even if it were superfluous

for ourselves. There are certainly many men of earnest and deep character who are capable of remaining true to the end even in a free love relationship—it would be poor testimony to the power of love were this not so; but for the majority of people the outward form is absolutely necessary; the earnestness which attaches to a publicly recognised bond is (for them at least) a powerful protection against the irresponsible elements in their own natures. Consider the comparative seldomness with which two people, both of deep and consistent character, happen to mate together! Nothing is more frequent than an attraction based upon a difference of temperament. No one can know beforehand, in the case of any given couple, that one of them will not be weaker and more in danger than the other, hence needing the solemn suggestive influence of a social institution and form to keep them true to their own best self. Moreover, inward bonds and responsibilities, however deep and true may be the feeling behind them, become more earnest and more momentous when clothed with a definite outward form. They then acquire a new influence in our daily life.

Hence out of our very care for the weaker-willed and less stable members of society it is incumbent upon us to retain the form in all its sanctity. Those who blind themselves to this social duty of chivalry will thereby lose refinement and chivalry in their own love relationships, so close is the connection between form and spirit in the sphere of sex.

It is in fact a general truth that truly noble characters are very rarely despisers of form. The naïve

way in which most people look at things simply from the point of view of their own advantage or disadvantage is the exact opposite of all good breeding and education, the very object of which is to take us outside ourselves and put us in touch with life as a whole.

Occasionally we find a man of truly noble character who despises form; he does so because he is lacking in knowledge of human nature and in concrete experience of life, and hence does not realise what an indispensable part form plays in our life. Who has not observed that it is often precisely the finest and purest men who give utterance to the most dangerous teaching! They are so refined, so free from the brutal element in human nature, so remote from the weaknesses and evil passions of the multitude, that they are apt to forget how greatly they differ from other people! These rare characters do not themselves need any fixed forms, because they have not to struggle against and hold down disruptive forces within their own souls. With them, high and pure thoughts reign with ease and security, like the gods on Olympus. But such men and women make a disastrous mistake when, in their ignorance of human nature, they say, "Because *we* do not find forms necessary, they are not necessary, for the *others*"—thus depriving these others of the only means by which they might themselves rise to a certain degree of true moral freedom. It is a most unfortunate thing that these high and pure characters do not better understand the psychological history of their own moral security and elevation, the strict discipline of many generations of self-

conquest, self-denial and sacrifice, as last result and final flower of which, such pure spiritual souls as their own have been produced. If they only realised this they would never wish to attack the very conditions and principles out of which their own moral freedom has been developed. Such people did not begin their moral ascent at the bottom rung of the ladder. They have inherited the moral capital of centuries of human culture. They are the product of the happy coincidence of a rare series of favourable circumstances, and there is something really tragic in their inability sympathetically to understand the position of those who have still to struggle with the rude natural forces of our present earthly life. One is reminded of the light-heartedness displayed by the heirs of self-made men, who often entirely fail to appreciate the painful and self-denying toil which lies behind the fortunes they inherit, and not understanding the very conditions of their own security, form no idea of the fearful insecurity and pitilessness of real life. When men and women of this type take up reform work, they frequently speak of "paradise"—but the possibility of "hell" does not occur to them. They do not understand the *actual man* with his selfish weaknesses, his animal desires, and his wavering principles. Out of this ignorance they influence him to underrate the real significance of these inner dangers and advise him to throw away means of moral assistance which are indispensable to *him*—if not to those who have attained moral freedom. The final result is not higher freedom, but an increased absence of freedom! Modern reformers of the type we are referring to

proclaim the highest ideal of freedom, but at the same time and in the name of freedom, they deprive people of the most indispensable means of in any way realising this ideal—namely, those fixed forms and principles which strengthen and purify all that is most stable in human nature, and thus protect us from the tyranny of impulse and desire.

True monogamy will not be realised in the first place except by an élite ; for the others it will be an outward compulsion and imperative, which is laid upon them from a superior world of freedom. Ancient customs passed on from former stages of life are still influential, and will only gradually give way to an *altera natura* in which the spiritual claims will have acquired, so to speak, an organic power over against the mere instinct for the preservation of the race. We cannot go so far back as to abandon the monogamous ideal—*undivided love and perfect loyalty belong to the foundations of our whole social civilisation.* Everything we possess of noble love, nay, even of deeper spiritual development, we owe, apart from the effect of religion, to the institution of the monogamous family. The demand of a wife for absolute loyalty from her husband is due to no mere egoistic desire for possession. The wife realises that conjugal infidelity will give rise to a disintegration of family life, to an increase of brutality in every sphere of life (naturally following upon such a liberation of elementary instincts), and to a growing weakness in the face of the physiological and pathological dangers which beset humanity. Our modern theoretical reformers may well learn a lesson from Goethe's

Zauberlehrling, for they do not know the spirits whom they summon to liberty, and they have no conception whatever of the protective value of the institutions and ideals which they attack and seek to replace.

St. Augustine made the following appeal to women: "Wives, be jealous of your husbands—for the sake not of the flesh but of the spirit! I warn, I beg, I command you: CHRIST in me commands it; the Bishop commands it; He before whom my heart burns knows what manner of spirit it is in me which commands it. I order you not to allow your husbands to go after whorish women; rather appeal to the Church against them! . . . In all other things obey your husbands and serve them willingly from love. No defiance, no haughtiness, no disobedience should be in you; but in *this* matter, I tell you, you must speak, nay, you must *shout*, for your rights." These words were written by no arm-chair philosopher; they were the product of a profound experience of life. The great Christian educators knew how close is the connection between man's victory over the tyranny of sexual impulse and his spiritual liberation, nay, his whole character and his development as a personality.

The discipline demanded by the monogamous ideal is to-day widely looked upon as not only impracticable but monstrous. The time will come when it will be as much a part of complete manhood as any other kind of honourable conduct, and when a doctor will as little think of recommending, in the name of "health," sexual intercourse outside marriage, as he would now think of advising poor workmen to resort to theft.

The monogamous marriage, as the sole form of sex relationship, is nothing more than an application to the sphere of sex of that supremacy of conscience which is admitted in all other departments of life. The character-destroying and will- and nerve-weakening influence of sexual immorality rests upon the fact that in all such practices we find ourselves in contradiction with our own truest selves. If, instead of deceiving ourselves, we really follow out, realistically, the whole effect of an immoral relationship upon a woman's soul and life, pursuing its consequences to the very end, we shall be compelled to see that such a relationship is invariably incompatible with any consistent feeling of responsibility or true chivalry. No "new morality" can alter the fact that only the guarantee of a fixed and sacred life-bond can save both man and woman from all the wretched characterlessness which is essentially bound up with "free" relationships. And the more the idea of social responsibility gains in depth and consistency, the more a far-seeing care for the young calls upon every section of society for its co-operation, the more impossible it must become for men, in that sphere which is most replete with social consequences, to remain in a state of vagabondage. For are there not multitudes of men to-day whose sexual life may be compared to the habits of those gipsies who spend their lives roaming and stealing in the midst of an ordered society? Ch. von Ehrenfels, Professor of Philosophy at Prague, has expressed himself very pertinently with regard to the effect of our "double morality" upon our whole civilised life: he points out that to-day the majority of men

agree to obtain "the first delights of sexual love from women whose acquaintance they would deny in the light of day, while they draw a heavy veil of deceit and hypocrisy over the most impressive experiences of their youthful days. In their rôles as respectable persons, fathers and educators, and in their intercourse with women recognised in society (nay, with their own wives), they force into the background an important portion of their recollections, emotional experiences and personal character. Such men must get used to enjoying their own peaceful, respectable home life as fathers and husbands without allowing themselves to be troubled by the fact that the women whom they first drew to themselves to satisfy their sexual yearnings are going down to ruin in a filthy quagmire of physical and moral suffering. A people which acquiesces in all this as something quite ordinary and normal cannot possibly rise above a very low level of truth, honour, and humanity. Men who, in so vital a sphere as that of sex-relationships, are systematically educated to brutality and hypocrisy, cannot straightway turn round and manifest themselves in other departments of life as pure, honourable and humane characters. No impartial person can require any further demonstration of this fact."

(*d*) THE EDUCATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MONOGAMY

In Germany, if not in other countries, the great educators of the Middle Ages held it a singular educational triumph to enable their pupils to achieve the so-called *Stäte*, or condition of stability. This

restful self-control was looked upon as being a victory of the spirit over the restlessness and changeability of human nature. Our own age is peculiarly in need of an educational ideal of this type. Such self-control is the foundation of all health, all fruitful work, all deeply-rooted will-power ; in short it is at the bottom of all those qualities which distinguish the human being from the undisciplined animal. This kind of education is, however, impossible unless the relationship of the sexes, which is the fountain of all life, is itself placed under the beneficial influence of this state of discipline, and the union of man and woman raised to the position of a lifelong bond instead of being merely an act of self-indulgence. We have already referred to the assertion that strict monogamy is no more than a transition form. We maintain, on the other hand, that precisely on account of the educational value of monogamy, society will be compelled, more and more, to take its stand upon a monogamic basis. All other forms of sex-relationship have a disintegrating effect upon character. Monogamy alone is an education in constancy, in concentration of feeling, and in will-power. It thus exerts a deepening and strengthening influence throughout the whole of society, an influence which affects all the relationships into which human beings can enter.

Pestalozzi himself, in his suggestions with regard to the educational treatment of the sex question, gives a leading place to the disciplinary value of the institution of marriage. In his book *Leonard and Gertrude* he explains the supreme importance of boys and girls, from the very beginning, conceiving of sexual union

as a *permanent* thing. The ideal of a truly ordered marriage, with all its enduring mutual confidence, its educative power, and its far-reaching beneficent influence, should be clearly placed before them so as to fill their imaginations: this will ensure that, from the earliest possible age, the awakening sexual feelings and their attendant images shall be mentally associated, as a matter of course, with the conception of an ordered and enduring institution. The new desires will thus be purified, consecrated, and preserved from degeneration. Sex relationships will not be thought of except as quite naturally associated with the moral and spiritual side of life.

At this point I should like to mention that in talking with children or young people about sexual matters the stress should not be laid upon the *negative* side, upon warnings as to the dangers of immorality, but upon what is *positive*. It should be made clear that the institution of marriage serves to protect the highest interests of character against the world of undisciplined natural desires. It will be quite impossible to give young people any definite hold over their blind and thoughtless lower instincts unless their minds are filled with *a definite positive ideal*. The foregoing refutations of the modern attacks on marriage might be employed to some extent in this connection. In speaking of sexual immorality, it is more important to refer to the injuries it inflicts upon character than to its hygienic dangers: it can be pointed out that the worst disease which can be contracted by any one, is that disease of the character which develops when a man accustoms himself to a course of action which

cannot be sanctioned by his better self. This disease destroys the consistency of a man's inner life and prepares him for unreliable conduct in all other spheres of activity. It delivers him over to the power of momentary impulses.

In Dante's *Inferno*, the slaves of Eros are depicted as being continually whirled through the air in a state of helplessness, and we are told how the whole surrounding atmosphere is agitated by these erotic storm centres. The true student of human nature perceives that such is the inevitable fate of all those who have once begun to make their sexual desires the guiding-stars of their lives, and to cut themselves loose from those higher principles whose function it is to place the sex element in its proper position of service.

CHAPTER V

LOVE AND MARRIAGE

ONE of the most popular and plausible of modern arguments against a strictly monogamous form of marriage is that based upon the idea that a sex-relationship is only moral when consecrated by true love. It is held that the external form has nothing to do with the matter. Wherever true love exists, there is a moral relationship. The legal form is non-essential. It is asked: What can a registrar and a priest do to make love moral? For if true love be lacking no outward consecration can make the relationship a right one.

This is an old story. From time immemorial a contempt of marriage forms has been a feature of that kind of love which, carried away by its own glamour, forgets the existence of everything outside itself. Among other things it forgets that whole world of faithless weakness, of treachery, and of selfish desire, which lies hidden deep down in the human heart, ready to break out when the first warmth of feeling has cooled—more especially if spiritual and moral discipline has been scorned and neglected in the pursuit of love.

With regard to this undervaluation of the external form, we have already explained that what are apparently merely outward forms may have great

psychological value. The monogamous marriage, as a definite and recognised bond, secures a man or woman against the merely impulsive consideration of a most momentous step. It strengthens all the responsibilities of sex-life, and deepens and purifies the feelings themselves by the profound earnestness with which it surrounds the whole relationship. It places *sub specie æternitatis* that which passion sees only in the light of transitory feeling. Religion, morality and society are in consequence undoubtedly right in their condemnation of every love-relationship the nature of which implies a rebellion against forms sacred to social welfare.

Such a relationship is not only to be condemned because it is necessary that sex-feeling should not become liberated from the other interests and claims of society and the individual. It is to be condemned from the standpoint of really great and true love itself. Just as an artist gives clear expression to feelings of which the ordinary man is only vaguely conscious, so the consecrated form sharply defines and publicly expresses that for which our deepest feelings themselves are more or less consciously craving—elevation above the mood of the moment, perfect loving care and unselfish protection. Since the language of eternity can only too easily be borrowed by merely sensuous passion, it is all the more indispensable that man's deeper and more spiritual personality should voice its demands in the unmistakable language of honourable customs and fixed rules of conduct, thus declaring from the very first its right to rule in this whole sphere of life.

Many will admit all the foregoing, but will say:

"Very well; sexual intercourse without marriage is immoral, but marriage without love is also immoral!" It is only in a certain sense that this statement is correct. A marriage concluded for material advantage and without real love or respect is assuredly not moral; a bond of such intimacy and involving such a community of tasks and responsibilities must be founded upon mutual sympathy or it becomes torture. But it is a vastly different thing to assert, as do so many moderns, that not only the conclusion of a marriage, but its *continuance*, should depend entirely upon the presence of sexual emotion, and that if the original feeling of love grows cold, and a new passion comes to dominate either of the parties, then the marriage form has lost its right and must give way to a new alliance. Ellen Key, for example, rejects any pledge of constancy, and demands absolute freedom of divorce, so that love and marriage may always be coexistent. She regards definite forms and pledges as absolutely immoral in their effect, because they interfere with the proper harmony of form and content and introduce an element of insincerity into the whole region of sex.[1]

[1] EDWARD CARPENTER'S THEORIES

Edward Carpenter's *Love's Coming of Age* is peculiarly characteristic of this tendency. The author writes with the most genuine idealism but with a complete ignorance of life and human nature; for young people, in particular, his ideas are therefore in the highest degree dangerous. He says (p. 107): "Ideally speaking it is plain that anything like a perfect union must have perfect freedom for its condition; and while it is quite supposable that a lover might out of the fullness of his heart *make* promises and give pledges, it is really almost inconceivable that anyone having that delicate and proud sense which marks deep feeling, could possibly *demand* a promise from his loved one. As there is undoubtedly a certain natural reticence in sex, so perhaps the most decent thing in true Marriage would be to say nothing, make no promises—either for a year or a lifetime. Promises are bad at any

All this may sound plausible enough; but we ask, what would be the actual consequence of such a way of looking at things? Would it not be the production of a mere spirit of levity with regard to love? We think of the girl who walks arm in arm with her lover and *mit Äugeln schon dem Nachbar sich verbindet.*

These erotic idealists continually forget that a pledge of loyalty is not a mere matter of compulsion from without, of holding a union forcibly together, at any cost, however empty it may be of real meaning. Such a pledge is *in itself a spiritual force*, possessed of the most potent educational influence over the human sex-relationship. It tends to direct attention to the inner significance of love, just as, on the other hand, the mere pursuit of sex pleasure ends in characterless superficiality. Its effect is like that of a very earnest prayer, which, apart from its strictly religious effect, acts as a powerful auto-suggestive agent upon the mind of the sincere supplicant, and itself awakens new forces. A solemn pledge of loyalty, a determined direction of will towards faithfulness actually increases the constancy of the feelings themselves. It is totally false to persuade either oneself or anyone else that loyalty is something lying entirely outside the sphere of the will. Modern study of hygienic pedagogy and

time, and when the heart is full silence befits it best." At this point one feels impelled to ask: Does Edward Carpenter really believe that the great and noble men and women of deep feeling, who have up to the present felt that the solemn pledge of troth was something right and wholesome, were one and all his inferiors in sensibility and refinement of emotion? And was it only prejudice and brute inertia which kept them from declaring their freedom? The pledge of fidelity is not a mere vow between two people; it is in the first place a pledge to support *the institution of marriage as such*, with all its wide consequences stretching far beyond the individual life.

of psychotherapy confirms the idea that nothing is so capable of exerting a purifying and protective influence over the thoughts and will, as a firm and definitely expressed resolution. It rallies all the higher forces together and restrains us from every species of thoughtless dallying with temptation. A solemn oath, a great thought out of the realm of imperishable values, is like the presence of a noble man, in whose company one is compelled to think one's best thoughts, and to forget moments of weakness. In considering the problem of sex and education, this is the point of view from which lifelong monogamy should be regarded.

This bond is not something artificial or untrue. It is a great character-training force, which elevates and purifies earthly love by bringing it into contact with eternal love. This point of view is totally ignored by those modern writers and thinkers who speak so contemptuously of the superficiality of definite pledges and advocate a complete confidence in the mere feelings of the moment. Like all the spiritual gifts which humanity has received from Christianity, the pledge of loyalty in love (which is closely connected with Christian thought) brings with it an "awakening of the flesh"; it is not something forced upon man from without, something which has no connection with his inner life, rather is it an appeal to man's deeper faculty of love, an attempt to arouse it to consciousness.

As CHRIST, according to orthodox tradition, descended into hell, so the greatness and earnestness of the Christian marriage tradition descends into the region of our sensual nature and compels the animal

instincts to take their place under the authority of the spirit.

Those who have entered upon free sexual relationships should at any rate have the grace to admit that they have sinned against their partner, against their children and against themselves, and they should not attempt to base a "reform of sexual life" upon their weakness. The main characteristic of all such individualistic reform movements is that they are obsessed with the idea of one particular aspect of evil or suffering and describe this aspect with the utmost realism, while remaining absolutely blind to the very much greater misery which would result from the application of their own remedies. For this other suffering they have no sympathy and no reforming zeal! There are certainly many present-day conditions which urgently demand reform; there is too much temptation for weaker natures, especially in a non-religious age, and the over-luxurious standard of living, &c., is in truth a real obstacle in the way of genuine marriage. But help must first come from a spiritual renewal of our civilisation as a whole. Nothing could be more foolish and disastrous than an attempt to heal present evils through an abandonment of the essential bases of civilisation and character. The body cannot really be made whole by means which deaden the soul, and the evils of civilisation can never be truly remedied by killing the spiritual forces which hold the whole of our life together—whatever temporary benefits may result therefrom.

. . . . . .

Ellen Key and other modern erotic enthusiasts

assign considerable importance in their teaching to an idea which is neither scientifically proved nor represented by any great unanimity of traditional opinion. It is alleged that in the interest of the health and vitality of the race it is of decisive importance that the begettal of children should always take place at a time when erotic passion is at its height, and that sexual relationships should adapt themselves to this rule—that is to say, they should be subject to the readiest possible dissolution.

There is not a shadow of proof for this theory. One might on the contrary suppose that a strong sensuous intoxication would have something the same kind of effect upon the child that is attributed to alcoholic indulgence by the parents, when the paralysing of the higher spiritual qualities in the parents brings the erotic and sensuous side of the child's nature to exaggerated expression. It can be assumed with tolerable security, too, that parents of great will-power and self-control, whose erotic feelings are subordinate to higher considerations and feelings, would pass similar tendencies on to their offspring—or even if this did not take place, the whole atmosphere of the parental example would exert a profound pedagogical influence upon the children in the home. It may not be out of place to mention in this connection that such a genius of love and power as Goethe was by no means born in a love-marriage, in Ellen Key's sense of the term!

It is a continually recurring misunderstanding on the part of these modern writers to suppose that the most passionate sexual satisfaction is identical with the greatest enhancement of human energy, whereas

in reality erotic power which has been preserved, dominated and directed along channels of spiritual activity, undoubtedly represents a much more powerful and influential manifestation of life—and not only for the individual but for the race. Erotic power has a great significance and may carry with it a great blessing, but only when it finds itself in complete agreement with those great feelings and ideals which hold humanity together, and strengthens and illuminates them—when, on the other hand, it counteracts, destroys, or blunts them and endeavours to develop itself at their expense, it will invariably weaken the whole life-energy of man, and in this sense injure his progeny also. True observers of history and life will find plenty of support for this statement.

Erotic feeling, which is in this sense (when we consider its whole history) so dependent upon the development of the higher spiritual powers of man, in particular upon the refinement and deepening of man's social feelings, should not take up too central and too dominant a position in life. For this will inevitably give rise to the idea that the higher order and the higher forces must give way to mere erotic passion, a course which always leads sooner or later to the degeneration of passion itself.

Considering all those who suffer from peculiarly dangerous temperaments, those who are prevented by some misfortune from fulfilling their sexual desires (such as cripples and persons unable to earn a living) or finally those unfortunate people whose dispositions are perverse, we perceive a further reason of the greatest importance for not laying a still

further emphasis upon the erotic side of life, beyond that which it receives from its own natural force: for all the foregoing persons can receive comfort, support, and help only by refusing to accept erotic satisfaction as the central event of life, and directing their attention towards the superior significance of other interests and values. The modern view of the matter, however, serves only to confirm impulsive and abnormal people in their erotic slavery.

It is therefore obvious that there are various reasons why the isolation of the erotic element from all other conditions and aims of human life is an utterly thoughtless and impracticable idea, why it overlooks the elementary facts of human nature, and why it leaves out of account the most fundamental necessities of real life. One cannot be surprised when the representatives of the "new morality" express the opinion that now at last the time has come when man is fit to throw off all the definite rules and customs which have hitherto been associated with sexual love; for surely never has there been an age distinguished by such an amazing and widespread superficiality and crudity of thought in these matters, such a shortsightedness and such a weak-brained sentimentality as that which obtains in our own time.

CHRISTIANITY AND LOVE

It will be asked: Will not this strict subordination of erotic feeling to the finest demands of the conscience necessarily lead to an impoverishment and restriction of sexual love? Ellen Key and many other modern authors answer this question in the

affirmative. They object to the hard rule which the old ethic imposes upon our sexual desires, and Ellen Key speaks of the "opportunities of happiness" which are lost in the name of constancy and responsibility, and believes that people should not only sacrifice themselves for others but should have the courage (as she quaintly puts it) to sacrifice others to themselves in the interests of the "enhancement of their erotic life." It is, of course, completely overlooked that the higher sexual passion sung by the poets is something more than the mere following of selfish and blind instincts, but is itself the *product* of an education in self-denial and in spiritual resistance to sense impulses, an education which has been going on for centuries. The great enrichment and deepening of sexual love which has taken place since the time of the Ancient World is a result of the self-forgetful love, the immense spiritual elevation above the sensuous sphere and the passionate inner life which have sprung from the world of religious feeling and raised the sexual impulses from the poverty of the merely sensuous level to the height and richness of spiritual life. The refinement of the conscience has in itself directly contributed towards the tenderness of erotic feeling!

Since Christianity develops man's capacity for self-forgetful devotion to the highest extent, it has in every direction enriched and deepened the sexual emotions. What was love in the heathen world compared to the love of Dante, Petrarch, and many another since? The well-developed soul which confines itself to the limits of the loyalty and responsibility of which it knows its need, and restrains

the Eros from asserting itself at the expense of character, receives back again, with thousandfold increase, all which it may have seemed to lose; nay, it develops its own truest life to its fullest fruit and escapes the emptiness and vanity of the sensuous world. It may be said indeed that the responsibility which religion laid upon the sexual relationships of men and women became converted into a new tenderness, and the self-denial which it demanded from unchartered passion turned into a new capacity for love and devotion.

Love cannot, with impunity, be liberated from the sacred order of life. This order, with its far-seeing care and its insistence upon constancy, is itself, so to speak, crystallised love; it expresses, for our guidance, the deepest essence of true love. Those who cut themselves loose from this order deprive their love of that deep earnestness and higher *caritas*, without which sex love may pass, at a day's notice, into the most brutal selfishness. It is indeed no accident that in the case of so-called "free love," the freedom always ends by triumphing over the love—that freedom which results from the spirit of sensuous vacillation and unchivalrous selfishness which lies in the rejection of the fixed order.

All this I say from the pedagogical point of view, in particular, and I should like to lay especial emphasis upon the way in which our modern advocates of "emancipated" love overlook what may be called the "pedagogy of all higher erotic feeling."

CHAPTER VI

MOTHERHOOD AND MARRIAGE

THE monogamic ethic is attacked at the present day, not only in the name of "freedom" or in the interests of a "richer life" and of "self-realisation," but also in the name of *pity*. It is desired to do away with the moral condemnation of unmarried mothers, and it is asserted that in this way alone can the position of these women be truly raised. We have already quoted Forel, who even describes it as immoral to make any distinction between married and unmarried mothers. Ellen Key would like to call holy all motherhood that has given rise to deep feelings of duty. The German *Bund für Mutterschutz* (League for the Protection of Mothers) takes up the same position, its aim in so doing being described as the "reformation of sexual ethics." The so-called "new ethic" arose in the first place out of the movement to free unmarried mothers from moral and social condemnation. Certain feminine representatives of this tendency do, it is true, attempt to reassure us by asserting that in principle the "trinity of father, mother, and child" is to be retained; it is their object merely to make room for exceptions. They fail, however, to comprehend that more especially in this sphere of life such exceptions destroy the rule and rob it of every authority; for if exceptions

are not to count as such, why should not everyone claim the right to be an exception? Who does not wish to reckon himself one of those choice spirits whose privilege it is to break the rules which apply to narrower natures? Over and over again it is the same story. The modern "reformers" and would-be prophets deliver their gospel of freedom without clearly understanding the actual living men and women for whom such freedom is intended.

The conditions with regard to divorce in some parts of America give us a faint idea of how severely the dignity of humanity would suffer if honourable moral custom and tradition in sex ethics were ever, definitely and on principle, to be replaced by mere individual inclination.

It would be difficult to find a more striking example of the pernicious influence of mere individualism (with which we have already dealt at the commencement of this work) than the modern propaganda by which, in the name of the protection of motherhood, it is sought to establish a "new ethic." In the case of such difficult and complicated problems as these it cannot be too earnestly insisted upon that all premature reform proposals should be met with great reserve. The literature of the tendency to which we are referring very well illustrates how a really well-balanced understanding of these questions is rendered impossible not only by selfishness and passion but even by pity, if the latter, as is usually the case, is exercised in an impulsive and one-sided manner and without reference to remoter consequences. Otherwise how could people avoid seeing that the only real protection of motherhood is that

offered by a powerful and authoritative institution which *binds and educates the man to the protection of motherhood.* From this point of view, every attempt to loosen the bonds of the monogamous marriage, every depreciation of its sacredness and dignity, is, in the first place, an outrage against the "protection of motherhood." The ethic which stamps all motherhood outside marriage as a sin does not originate in any mere rigidity of convention or moral Philistinism; it is the ripe fruit of a highly concrete observation of man's nature and is adapted to suit human nature as it really is. It is an expression of lack of confidence in the constancy and chivalry of man's sexual nature—defamatory, perhaps, but only too well justified. It is based upon the experience that as a general rule, however much we may regret it, male chivalry requires inviolable customs to stimulate it and enable it to gain the victory over looser tendencies. All the idle talk of grown-up children of both sexes will not alter man's real nature, and hence the old ethic remains the only practical method of dealing with real life and its unmerciful facts.

Before we renounce the monogamous home or degrade it by placing it on a level with every thoughtless sexual connection, let us contemplate for a moment the fundamental importance for the education of the child of the co-operation of woman and man. It is here a question, not of any merely private opinion, but of the preservation of an *institution* which serves as a necessary and successful corrective to the short-sightedness and lack of conscience of individuals. To place such an institution

on a level with mere loose freedom would be to degrade and to disavow it. We are being asked so to misuse our terms that they serve to obliterate the real contrasts of life!

Some more earnest feminine representatives of the "new ethic" protest against being identified with the advocacy of an irresponsible motherhood. Thus Ellen Key, in the case of every sexual relationship, recommends a contract with binding obligations with regard to the children. But what value have such pledges when they do not touch the very heart of the matter—namely, the question as to what is to become of the enduring community of life between parents and children, the very existence of which is an educational factor of enormous importance, and the destruction of which, in spite of every modern sophistry, has immeasurably tragical consequences for both mother and child. Every sexual relationship is, in reality, by its very nature, indissoluble, so deep are its inner and outer consequences: it creates responsibilities which only a lifelong connection can adequately fulfil. The monogamous institution is therefore no merely artificial arrangement which is imposed upon us arbitrarily; rather is it the *outward expression of the deepest truth of the human sex-relationship itself.* Even if human society could become entirely indifferent to the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate motherhood, the latter would nevertheless revenge itself on all concerned, by means of the influence it exerts upon character, the injury it inflicts upon the soul by depriving it of strengthening and educative influences.

For all these reasons, therefore, we do not find it possible to describe all motherhood without distinction as holy. It is impossible to place levity and recklessness on a level with thoughtfulness and a sense of responsibility, however much we may be desirous, in thus obliterating the distinction, to shield naturally noble natures who—without being corrupt at heart—have fallen in some moment of carelessness. Levity, even in the case of a generous and pure nature, is nevertheless levity and must be described as such; this is all the more necessary in the case of such finer natures, for if they are to have character, the very extent of their sensibility demands that their development should be ordered and disciplined, if they are not to be a curse to themselves and others. If, then, it be asserted that "all motherhood is holy if it has called forth deep impulses of duty," we reply that a guilty act does not become a holy one because it is followed by better resolves. There is only *one* holy motherhood, and that is the motherhood that not only gives rise to deep impulses of duty but which itself *arose from* such impulses, was guided by them from the very beginning, and was inspired to self-control and the most far-seeing solicitude. Thoughtlessness or selfish desire are quite out of place in the conception of holy motherhood. Those who wish to obliterate such an important distinction as that to which we refer are guilty of blasphemy against the ideal. Moreover they are trifling with speech, with life itself—and with motherhood. It is not thus that we can really assist the weaker ones amongst us. Without intention, and even unknowingly, such

a line of argument cannot but conduce towards moral invertebracy. Not only in the name of a cold and stern morality, but in the interests of the highest charity, we should therefore never refrain from condemning all motherhood standing outside that definite scheme of life which can alone give really solid guarantees for the rearing and education of the offspring. This unwavering condemnation of irregular motherhood must always remain the foundation of woman's code of honour.

Laxity of this description should be attacked, too, from the erotic standpoint itself. It is only possible in some measure to secure confidence in a right choice in love and a timely dissipation of illusions by compelling a time of delay and reflection between the commencement of passion and its final consummation. Such a compulsion results from the fixed form of marriage. Sexual love, more than anything else, needs prudent guidance, and this is possible only through a fixed and definite institution, incapable of being modified by the parties concerned.

And every man, if he remain true to his better self, must insist upon the same code. If he considers the woman merely from the point of view of his own sexual desires, she sinks to be his mere slave. But if he looks upon her in the light of the nobler necessities of his own nature, he will crown her with the halo of the "eternal feminine"; if he looks up to depths of love in her deeper than any in his own nature, then he will be able to say to her, *noblesse oblige*—if *thou* shouldst fall, then is the world fallen! A woman can worthily demonstrate her elevation

above merely selfish and sensual passion, and her corresponding true modesty only by being absolutely loyal to the consecrated form of marriage. It may indeed be said that precisely that motherliness in her which raises her above the man, must firmly insist upon real guarantees in a sex relationship, and upon the ceremony which connects such a relationship with religion and tradition ; for it is her maternal function which binds woman so strongly and directly to the future, and connects her so mysteriously with the Creator of all things. Man, on the other hand, is compelled to spend most of his strength in wrestling with the immediate present.

In dealing with the problem of illegitimate motherhood, it is very much to be regretted that for the most part two quite one-sided points of view are set up one against the other. These mutually influence one another in their one-sidedness, and intensify the opposition. On the one side we have the standpoint of a cold and Pharisaical morality, passing sentence on the deed alone, with no trace of love or of psychological insight, and allowing the doer to go to perdition. On the other hand there is the equally erroneous standpoint which knows nothing but sympathy with the doer, and with the words "tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner" abandons every attempt at a verdict based on principle ; as if the "comprendre" meant facing only the subjective motives for the deed, and totally neglecting its effect on society and on all those bound up with its consequences! The part of true understanding is to trace out the connection between cause and effect, not only retrospectively, but for the future also. The

retrospection should result in gentleness towards the doer, the glance into the future in severity towards the deed. It is in truth deeply significant that Christianity, the doctrine of pity carried to its highest point, yet contains the doctrine of a Day of Judgment. It is just when the highest love makes itself felt in life, when all its blessings and all its consequences become clear, that the most glaring light is thrown on all that contrasts with such love, on all careless levity, lack of responsibility, of self-control and of forethought. The condemnation of illegitimate motherhood is therefore a consequence of love and not of harshness. Only those who have fully realised this will be able to help, in the right spirit, those who have lost the way, instead of so blurring the boundary between error and truth, out of a merely weak sympathy, that the foothold of those who have once fallen is for ever taken away. To-day the grand old idea of penance has unfortunately faded from the minds of the great majority. No one will now bear the consequences of his own actions: everything is extenuated and glossed over—and people quite forget that "only he who feels his fault as great can really become greater than his fault." And they forget the simple psychological truth, that the stern condemnation of unregulated motherhood is in itself a support for thousands whose temperament is of a kind to drive them into ruin, and who would yet suffer fearfully under all the natural consequences of illegitimate procreation.

Pestalozzi, whose striking work on *Legislation and Infanticide* is nothing but an appealing cry for pity for the unmarried mother, fought all his life

against any weakening of moral principles in the sphere of sex, and uttered the following profoundly just warning, which one may well repeat to many well-meaning but shortsighted reformers of to-day: "I am too old and have had too much experience to be in a moment's doubt as to where heedless speech and judgment about moral lapses and crimes will lead a man, once he falls into a position of temptation. Our inborn horror of evil diminishes when we are too ready with our excuses, and we actually prepare ourselves for guilt when we too lightly condone the guilt of others."

We should guard against Pharisaism by a deep and humble recognition of our own shortcomings; but not by the feeble surrender of clear and definite judgment, a surrender which is all too often used (like a papal indulgence) for the benefit of our own future errors.[1] Those who have erred should certainly be much more carefully protected against misery and abandonment, and enabled adequately to accomplish their maternal duties. But whoever offers them, together with physical and social ministrations, a new ethical system, thereby destroys all he has given; for he takes from them their best treasure,

[1] We can protect ourselves against Pharisaism only by carefully asking ourselves whether it really was just our own moral strength which preserved us, at moments when others lost their balance, or whether it was perhaps only a lack of inner or outer temptation; and whether, in the region of our peculiar weakness and temptation, we are not even more helpless and vacillating than those to whom we think ourselves so vastly superior?

"To him who has loved much, much shall be forgiven." This saying should indicate to us that many men lose their footing, not out of inward corruption, self-seeking, or the love of pleasure, but from good and estimable motives—from wealth, not from poverty. Not in their case, either, should the deed be excused—that would only render their foothold still more insecure, but "much will be forgiven them from above."

namely, all possibility of morally and spiritually outgrowing their own weakness. And for the child which they have to bring up this is incomparably more precious than any sentimental and artificial levelling of values.

With regard to the whole question of the suffering of illegitimate children (which is also claimed as a reason for levelling the distinction between illegitimacy and legitimacy), we must make it clear, once for all, that such an artificial levelling is absolutely impossible: the actual difference between the concrete and physically inevitable effects which result from the two kinds of motherhood is so fundamental that it cannot be obliterated by any abstract levelling. It lies in the very nature of the illicit bond that the child is deprived of all the benefits of permanent family ties; and this deprivation, with all its tragic consequences, will always throw a shadow over the parent, a shadow which no transmuting of values can convert into light. The suffering of illegitimate children is therefore indissolubly bound up with free love as such, and the more lightly the matter is treated, the more children will it affect. Are we to put regularity and irregularity on a par, so that the irregular father may not lose his halo in the eyes of the child? That would indeed be a shortsighted form of pedagogy. There are many very delicate educational problems involved in giving children the right point of view towards the errors of their parents —but never (and least of all in the interests of the children) should heedlessness and responsibility be placed on a par in those relations of life which are the most pregnant with consequences.

At this point we will quote the words of another German woman with a great experience of life and of an indisputably public-spirited temper, Frau Elizabeth Gnauck-Kühne, who has written the following passage against any attempt to combine the rightful cause of the protection of motherhood with the introduction of new ethical principles:

"The placing of the unattached mother on the same plane as the married, lowers the institution of marriage, lessens its significance, and makes it appear superfluous. And the lifelong monogamous marriage, the greatest achievement of human civilisation, is an institution for the protection of the *woman*, not of the man. It is not the man who is physically burdened through the natural duty of marriage; not on the male organism are the penalties of propagation laid, but on the female. To injure the institution organised by State and Church for the protection of motherhood is therefore tantamount to destroying the roof which has hitherto sheltered the wife.

"The much maligned Middle Ages established magnificent places of refuge,[1] but at the same time held high the monogamous ideal, and punished disregard of the law of Church and State with deprivation of civil rights. . . .

"Strength can bear discipline; strength demands discipline and regulation; strength commits excesses, struggles and plunges, overflows its boundaries, but it does not dribble away in a disintegrating levelling

[1] Frau Gnauck-Kühne here quotes (as a witness certainly beyond suspicion) Professor Bücher, who in his *Frauenfrage im Mittelalter* (p. 53) says: "Do we possess institutions which can be compared with the humane foundations of the Beguines, the houses of penitent sisters?"

which obliterates all boundaries, and removes all personal responsibility!

"Whether a woman becomes a mother in the married state or outside its sheltering wall is *not* a matter of indifference. *Then we must distinguish between married and unmarried mothers!* Let us be ready with warm-hearted help for the unmarried mother and her children, let us found places of refuge for them, but let us also be merciful to our *sex as a whole*, and not try, in our fatal blindness, to undermine the walls which civilisation has raised, slowly and with unutterable toil, for the protection of womanhood."

We should certainly be the last to declare ourselves in accord with the prevalent double morality, which in fact treats the male as the weaker sex, since it dispenses him from obligations which are made inexorably binding on the woman. Indeed we sincerely welcome all attempts whose aim is the lessening of the misery of the unmarried mother and her child, and the encouragement of the man in the fulfilment of his duties.

But the problem of really progressive efforts in this field must obviously be how to *raise* the moral level of the man, not how to *lower* that of the woman, or how to give her a new ethical system, which can only lead her into temptation, and into the looser ways of many men! We must educate the man by making greater demands on his strength of will.

At all times truly noble women have regarded their high educative responsibility from this standpoint, and have felt deeply and painfully even the smallest deviation on their part from the sacred laws

of life, not only as an offence against the fundamental interests of their sex, but also as a fall from the truest maternity with its opposition to all self-seeking violence. Selma Lagerlöf draws just such a feminine character, with convincing psychological insight, in Gösta Berling, a woman who cannot do enough in the way of expiation. The true woman, through her profound feminine intuition, must realise that to her, above anyone else, is entrusted the counteraction of all uncontrolled passion and of all the compelling tyranny of the moment; because in sexual life the man is conscious only of the moment, while she lives in a world of consequences, and is therefore wholly dependent upon impulses being controlled and directed by morality. (Morality means motherhood, a conquest over self-seeking, and a protection for the weak and heedless. But the "new ethic" leads to chaos!)

WOMEN AND MORALITY

It is truly astonishing that women (who depend to such an extraordinary degree on a permanent bond, whose pedagogic work stands in such need of man's supplementary aid, and whose whole happiness in life depends on the education of the masculine sex-impulse by means of fixed regulations) should to-day be in the forefront of those who propagate lax and naturalistic views, and talk of the glorious independence of free love. This can only be explained on the ground that the old sanctities of marriage still exercise such a profound effect that these women can form no clear mental picture of the state of affairs that would come

about, if individual caprice really became supreme in sexual matters. When one reads that modern women, writing on "sexual enlightenment," make fun of the old high-principled morality, and talk of the "throttling of impulses" (in what is after all only a case of that elementary restraint which alone leads to liberty), one is forced to think of the words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

In Michelangelo's pictures on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel we find a deeply significant representation of the creation of the woman out of the man's rib. Immediately after the creation she raises her hands in prayer to GOD, as if she were fundamentally conscious that she is lost, if the relations of the sexes are left to mere nature and are not placed under the protection of the HOLY SPIRIT.

THE OLD MORALITY AND THE "NEW MORALITY"

At this point I hear certain of the more serious representatives of the so-called "new ethic" exclaim: "But we, too, do not in the least desire the divorce of sexual things from the higher powers of the soul —we merely wish spirit and senses to meet on the common ground of freedom." And it is doubtless true that it would be entirely unjust to certain representatives of the new sex ethic, to assert that their point of difference with the old ethic consisted in their wish to absolve erotic life from all responsibility. If, for example, one reads an author like Forel, one will find that he demands, from the

point of view of eugenics, a very much increased sense of responsibility. This admission on our part, made in the interests of justice, will, however, enable us to point out still more clearly where the most fundamental difference between the old ethic and the new really lies. It lies, not in a difference of *final aim*, but in an absolute difference of the *means* considered necessary for the achievement of this aim. These reformers do not desire, any more than we do, a reign of crude impulse, but they do not see that the practical realisation of their disintegrating proposals would inevitably lead to this! *They have a pure aim in view—but from lack of knowledge of life and human nature they propose an entirely inefficient means of attaining to it.* This is especially glaring in Forel's writings, and is all the more surprising, as the material which he marshals before our eyes would surely suffice to cure any reader of an optimistic view of human sensuality. We are given ghastly glimpses into the abysses of sexual desire; we see the terrible degeneracy which lies in ambush behind every emancipation of lust, leading to artificiality, to the destruction of the nervous system, and even to perversion. What we should expect after reading such a work, is that its author, of all men, will, in view of such dangers, recommend the most drastic spiritual counteraction! Instead, it is forced upon us that all his sexual morality at bottom amounts to, is as convenient as possible a technique for the prevention of conception, by which means every kind of unhealthy propagation is to be checked. But for these hygienic limitations, and a corresponding care for posterity,

almost anything is allowed—bigamy, polygamy, or free love. The effect of all this on character, and hence finally on physique, too, is absolutely ignored.

And Forel also forgets that he demands a far greater moral power of self-sacrifice, in the name of eugenics, from all who are threatened in health, than even Christianity enjoins in this sphere. Yet he does not trouble himself in the least about the pedagogic means of calling forth such self-sacrifice; on the contrary, he deprives such a feeling of any strengthening activity, since he is ready to open every door to individual caprice and passion, instead of educating men to self-mastery through mighty and inviolable ordinances. This is, however, a peculiar characteristic of the difference already alluded to, between the "modern" sex ethic and the traditional ethic. The reformers build their castles in the air. They do not know the dark abysses of human nature, and are therefore ignorant, too, of what education really is and what it requires. In spite of all their "this worldliness" (or perhaps because of it?) they are incorrigible Utopians. This is especially true of the advanced women writers on this question. They speak of the oneness of soul and sense; but they do not see that the soul only yields its higher powers to the erotic life, when the latter has made itself the bond-slave of the soul through great sacrifices and utter obedience.[1]

[1] In the woman, these two spheres are much less separate than in the man, whom it is far more difficult to educate to unity in this respect, just because his senses are more on the surface and coarser-fibred than those of the woman. For this very reason it is particularly fatal when women take themselves only as their starting-point in the sexual problem, instead of considering, above all, the weakness of man!

They desire the independence of the individual in decisions affecting sexual matters, but do not see that it is precisely when in a state of erotic excitation that man is least master of himself. Hence he is all the less independent, the more he is freed from fixed standards which cannot be called in question by his sensuous nature. They grant that rigid rules and strict discipline were no doubt good in the past, but believe that the man of to-day no longer needs such things—and with all this they do not realise that the modern man is not stronger, but weaker in will-power than the man of the past, and that this weakness arises from the very lack of hard and fast standards, as well as from the profoundly disintegrating effect of modern individualism. The latter, however, betokens a mere surrender of strong and steadfast personality in favour of a merely sensuous individuality with all its whims and its theatrically disguised self-seeking. Finally, they, too, desire a sense of responsibility, but do not know that with the great majority of men this sense of responsibility *urgently needs education and strengthening by fixed outward regulations*, and further that even spiritually-minded men (as Pascal long ago pointed out) can be greatly helped forward by such outward aids.

I should like, at this point, to emphasize the fact that the most essential part of the old sexual morality lies in the fact that it is also sexual pedagogy—*i.e.* its commandments and its prohibitions indicate to men not only the final aim, but are themselves at the same time the right

means of education whereby to make real progress towards this final goal; they do not leave us in doubt as to the tragic weakness and unreliability of our better desires in this sphere, and they are capable of organising our defence against a capricious sensualism, on a really psychological basis. I believe that the more we approach the sexual problem from the concrete pedagogic standpoint, instead of through academic abstractions or fantastic enthusiasms, the more we must recognise the concentrated educational power which is crystallized in lifelong monogamy.[1] We shall then be compelled to admit that the sensuous and dæmonic element in sexual life, with its capriciousness, neuroticism, and self-seeking, absolutely requires counterbalancing educationally, through the spiritual and visible ordinance of lifelong fidelity. Just as people believed in the Middle Ages that the black magic of the demons could be held in check only by the white magic of CHRIST, so it is certain that in the sexual sphere the unruly natural element can be exorcised and calmed only by its entirely purified opposite, and not by feeble concessions to the vacillating human subject!

[1] Ketteler says very truly: "Only when marriage is considered holy, when the parents themselves form their ideals upon the lofty thought of the indissolubility of marriage, is a family life possible such as God ordained for man and his education." (*Freiheit, Autorität u. Kirche.* Mayence, 1862, p. 194.)

CHAPTER VII

THE ARTIFICIAL RESTRICTION OF THE FAMILY

In the course of such a work as this, it would be impossible to avoid dealing with this important subject. The artificial prevention of conception has long been practised in secret, but only recently has it been openly recommended as being indispensable to a higher sexual ethic, and to a thoroughgoing racial hygiene.

It is asserted, in the first place, that the adoption of this practice will protect married women from the injury to health consequent upon too frequent motherhood; in the second place, it will render it possible for weak or otherwise undesirable persons to marry without burdening the community with degenerate offspring. It is therefore maintained that Neo-Malthusian practices should play an important part in the realisation of a far-seeing sense of social responsibility. At the same time it is alleged that our natural instinct of revulsion against their unnatural and calculating character is no more than a foolish prejudice. In every direction we see man subordinating nature to his own intellect and will, so why should he not make use of technical science in the sphere of sex rela-

tionships, where so many important interests are at stake?

These arguments are sufficiently plausible to be in the highest degree dangerous. Yet it is easy to reply to them. In the first place, we readily admit that the sphere of sex should be subjected to the human spirit; nay, we might go further and even define sexual ethics as the complete subordination of our sexual conduct to our life as a whole, with all its fundamental interests and responsibilities. But nothing could be more radically false than to imagine that the methods of Neo-Malthusianism mark an advance in the subordination of nature to the spirit. It must be obvious to every thinking person that precisely the opposite is the case. The perfection and popularisation of these practices will not assist men to master their instincts and passions, but will on the contrary make it easier than has ever before been the case for man's sexual and animal self to dominate the will and spirit. For the artificial prevention of conception does not in the least control or discipline the sexual feeling itself. *It merely frees it from producing its normal results: and it is these very results which have, in the past, so powerfully contributed towards self-discipline and self-control.* Remove the proper and natural consequences of sexual intercourse, and a controlling factor of the first importance has been eliminated. We may therefore assume with the utmost confidence that the subjection of men and women to their sensual passions will rapidly increase with the increase of Neo-Malthusian practices. It will increase, moreover, for this further reason that the

prevention of conception causes the sex instinct to concentrate itself, in a most unwholesome and dangerous manner, upon mere barren pleasure: here we have naked sensuality, stripped of all the nobility, sanctity, and responsibility which attach to the normally directed sexual impulse, associated as it is with *creation.* Those who are to-day recommending the practices to which we refer, have not the remotest idea of the slippery downward slope upon which they have set their feet. Once let people begin with deliberate scientific purpose to pick out the element of pleasure from sexual activity as a whole, while neglecting its true meaning and purpose in our lives, then there remains no reason why the pleasure itself should not be enhanced by scientific means. It is no accident that this enhancement is most extensively practised in the identical country in which the artificial restriction of the family has been most generally adopted.

But it will be asked: Is not the liberation of women from the burden of excessive motherhood a great success on the part of Neo-Malthusianism? It is only an apparent success. In reality it is women, in particular, who will be the sufferers through anything which increases sexual irresponsibility in men. Even the most excessive production of children could not endanger women so greatly or so deeply undermine the true necessities of their existence, as will the artificial restriction of the family. The male sex passion, when relieved from all sense of responsibility and from the necessity for periods of self-control, when artificially

liberated from the natural consequences which lend it meaning and dignity and link it to the purpose of life as a whole, will necessarily become more pleasure-seeking and more recklessly selfish than it could be under normal conditions. The result will be an increase in every sort of disloyalty and irresponsibility. This will not fail to make itself felt at those times when the wife is least able to respond to the claims of a desire for pleasure, and in cases of illness when she doubly needs her husband's undivided affection. The situations which will necessarily arise from the man's sexuality being exclusively directed towards sensuous gratification and being unaccustomed to control, will far surpass, in tragedy, sordidness, and poisonous consequences, anything which could possibly arise from the most unlimited child-bearing. Moreover immoderation in this last respect can be met only by an increasing spiritualisation and control of merely sensual passion, and never by methods which degrade and brutalise the sex impulse itself. It is true that these artificial methods may *momentarily* relieve much suffering. In the long-run, however, according to their own inner nature, they must increase the sum total of human suffering in every sphere of life—for their effect is immeasurably to increase the subjection of man to passion and artificial sensuousness. This effect will be felt not only in the sexual sphere. It will spread to all the other departments of life.

We may therefore feel absolutely certain that along these lines there can come nothing but injury to the human race—even if it were assured

(which is far from being the case) that these methods would result in the birth of none but the most desirable children.[1] Moreover this result pre-supposes a superhuman degree of responsibility and selflessness, the very qualities, it will be observed, which will most suffer under the Epicurean philosophy which stands behind the artificial restriction of the family! While speaking of the question of racial health we may remark that it should never be forgotten that not only in the case of the individual but in that of the race, too, the strengthening of character, and the establishment of the spirit as ruler over the body is the foundation of all health. For this reason, a married life in which all motives for the overcoming of self have been artificially eliminated must necessarily lead in the direction of racial degeneration.

"My teaching is health for all flesh," said CHRIST. Since, however, health is to such a large extent a product of spiritual and moral factors, and physical degeneration is frequently a direct product of weakness of character and spiritual bankruptcy, it is a false general principle to lay too much weight upon the physical conditions of the propagation of the race. Parents with weak physical health are quite capable of producing children whose spiritual and moral qualities are such as not only to convey an increment of innermost life-energy to the race, but to preserve the efficiency of a weak body, nay gradually to regenerate it. On the other hand, robust physical energy is only too readily converted into weak health if it enters upon life without preservative

[1] See note on p. 107.

spiritual forces. This point of view applies even to the sphere of psycho-pathology; morbid mental tendencies are often counteracted and disciplined to an extraordinary extent through ethical factors and in general by the inexhaustible regenerative power of the spirit. On the other hand, a lack of moral energy, even in the healthiest men, carries with it the germ of mental morbidity and nervous disturbance. With regard to the whole problem of heredity, it should always be borne in mind that dangerous tendencies on the part of one parent may be balanced by healthy influences derived from the other. *These considerations must not of course be understood in the sense that I deprecate responsibility with regard to really serious and indubitable hereditary dangers.* My desire is to protest against the brutal and superficial "heredity-terrorism" with which certain modern eugenic enthusiasts advocate a regulation of human breeding borrowed from the stables and totally foreign to the human race, where the problem of the right or duty of propagation is so infinitely more difficult and complicated. In the case of humanity, spiritual and ethical factors have to be taken into account. Moreover it is only in the rarest cases that we find two parents who are both of them, physically and psychically, so equally and so heavily tainted or defective, that anything could be safely predicted with regard to their children!

It is indeed no accident that the oldest wisdom directed man's attention rather towards *regeneration* than towards generation, towards *re-birth* rather than towards birth, and forbade him to play at arrangement in a sphere of life where the combinations

of the formative life forces are forever concealed from him. For us mortals it is impossible to recognise the real life-tendencies which are handed on from two human beings to a third; we shall never be able really to dominate our existence from this standpoint, but will merely pass from one hypothesis to another. We should therefore direct our whole effort towards the work of healing, reformation and regeneration, towards right care and right education. And all the methods which are thereby tested and practised towards the weakest and most endangered members of the community, will come to the good of those who are apparently the most healthy, preserving them and their descendants from degeneration. This is the one and only true "racial hygiene"—all artificial prevention, all imitation of that principle of the survival of the fit, or elimination of the unfit, which reigns upon the sub-human level, rests upon an act of self-deception; we believe ourselves to possess a knowledge which in reality we do not possess. It is an ironical fact that those who are the loudest in calling, in the name of the race, for a death sentence upon the existence of others *are perhaps themselves the true pioneers and precursors of racial extinction.* These remarks are naturally not directed against that influencing of heredity which is demanded under the name of "pre-natal" ethics: physical and mental hygiene on the part of the parents, abstention from alcohol, &c. This is rather a species of regeneration: it is not concerned with the prevention or selection of a particular potential child, but with the proper influencing of a particular child,

the development of which one cultivates, but the coming or not-coming of which has been left in GOD'S hands. This is the only right attitude for men and women to take up. They must hold fast to what is certain, and from that standpoint, in firmness and clearness, direct their outward activities. But in what is uncertain they must refrain from premature interference—it may be that some day, upon a higher level of spiritual experience, the knowledge that is now denied may be granted.

So much with regard to the eugenic arguments in favour of the preventive methods. There are many other very weighty arguments which might be brought up against these interferences with nature. There is to-day, unfortunately, an increasing number of men and women who are quite insensitive to the profound *uncleanness* of these methods, either because they are not so constituted as to feel it, or because their feelings have been blunted by so much professional occupation with the sexual side of life. It is in the highest degree desirable, however, that the conduct of the race in this respect should be determined (as was once indeed the case) by those who have retained simple and pure feelings and not by those in whom they have been blunted! Life is coarse and mechanical enough. It must become completely coarsened and uninspired if no higher considerations whatever enter into the base search for pleasure and the dull utilitarianism of modern conditions. The present age is sadly in need of a revival of the feeling that there is a kind of shame and chastity which springs from man's simplest and unspoiled self, and is, in such matters as these, a much safer

guide than cold abstract reason and calculating expediency. This inner chastity protests against the most intimate and devoted relationship of two people to one another being torn out of the darkness of elementary feeling into the artificial light of scientific technique and cold-blooded anticipation. The disappearance of shame in these matters is far from being a sign of health and strength—as is sometimes supposed. It is an indication of decay and degeneracy. What we call shame is the product of a deep and healthy life-instinct for the preservation of the unconscious and uncalculating element in the sexual sphere. This same shame it is which asserts itself against an "arranged" marriage; because the true position of the sexual should be behind that veil of self-forgetfulness which a great and passionate feeling throws over men:

Wenn Ihr's nicht fühlt—Ihr werdet's nicht erjagen!

The suffering caused by excessive childbirth among women is certainly to be taken very seriously. The remedy is to be found, however, in an increasing liberation of the woman from every species of sexual slavery. The full establishment of the woman in her dignity as a human personality will work against abuse of this sort; it will develop a type of domestic custom which, even in the hitherto backward countries, will strongly counterbalance the merely dominating instinct of the man—a result which will be at least as valuable to the man as to the woman. Such an increasing outward resistance to his sensual nature will be of great assistance in man's own moral liberation; and this education of

the man to higher spiritual freedom against the sex instinct is the second way to an amelioration of this suffering on the part of women. To-day, unfortunately, the majority of men find themselves in this respect still in an almost purely natural condition—they *must*, however, be raised above this level, just as they have been raised above the blind instinct of revenge which swayed men in the days of the family feud. It seems to me indubitable that the mastering and subjection of natural impulse, as shown in the sex instinct, is superior in cultural value to any other form of dominion over nature. Unfortunately our own age, in particular, instead of applying the great principle of mastery over nature to the sphere of sex, too, has largely sunk back into a sad and deadening naturalism. It appears as if, in this sphere, there was a desire for a complete rest from every kind of spiritual effort, and a resolve to allow nature entire sway over the human spirit.

For example, there could not be anything more objectionable than the way in which to-day, throughout a great part of our sexual literature, the terms "sexual intercourse" and "sexual satisfaction" are used, as if it was a question of mechanical functions which must be performed with the same regularity and imperative necessity as the operations of digestion. From all this jargon the suggestion continually goes out that in this sphere man is born to absolute surrender and slavery. It is perhaps the very worst type of mob tyranny that public opinion with regard to such matters should be governed, not by the great masters of the will and the great

teachers of love (who know that great joys are never won and kept without great denials), but by the great mass of uninspired men of the world, who have not the faintest idea of what is meant by the awakening of the flesh through the spirit, men who have no spiritual sense of honour with which to oppose the blind pressure of the sex-instinct. Here indeed it will be necessary to arouse life to strong and high ideals, and not to allow the true doctrine to be lowered through human weakness. There has never been an age in which there has been so much talk of freedom as in the present, and never one in which the most important struggle for freedom, the struggle against the world of mere impulse, has been so thrust into the background. But, as we have said, this struggle can be carried on only by the highest demands: here, if anywhere, are the words true: "Thou canst; then thou must!" It is precisely the great strong standards and limitations in this sphere which act as a true support and cure by suggestion for large numbers of those in a pathological condition, or of an overstrung type, while the weak following of impulse makes even strong people pathological. The ever-increasing use of excuses based upon "pathological disposition" is the best way to make unsound natures wholly the victims of their abnormal dispositions. Educators, in particular, should be very careful never to lose sight of this fact.

The great majority of human beings will never succeed in more than a partial solution of the sex problem. This is not, in the first place, any concern of the ethical thinker. It is not our business

to form theory according to practice, but rather to inspire practice from the point of view of the highest theory. We must answer the question: What is *true* hygiene, *consistent* responsibility, and *real* enhancement of life in this sphere? Those who will still live in short-sighted hygiene, half responsibility, and apparent enhancement of life, let them remain in their weak condition and endure the consequences. What is above all necessary is the heroic example of pioneers, true men who will bear witness in their own lives to the triumph of the spirit, men who will invade the lower levels with a definite example and testimony—and equally necessary is the example of true women who will demand *men* and not puppets, and will refuse to encourage man in his weakness and mere slavery to instinct, but will demand great tests of will-power, as once upon a time the women of the *Minnezeit* demanded noble deeds of those who sought their favour. In such a fashion, through the strengthening of the soul, will men become fit for true love. In the modern way, however, they will be fit only for the nerve doctor.

Perhaps it is because there is so much talk about freedom of personality in our age that so little of it is practised. If at one time, in the early centuries of Christianity, husbands and wives were able to live together as brothers and sisters, for the glory of CHRIST, as a glad witness of the newly discovered power of the spiritual man, then it should not be altogether too high a goal for the "free" man of to-day to obtain a sufficient amount of control over his sense-nature not to use or abuse the companion of his life solely in the work of propagation. Or

must we accept the sexual impulse as the sole and all-powerful genius of the human race, and is there no omnipotent GOD in life to give us freedom when we earnestly seek it? Through the spiritual domination and education of the sex instinct, that which nature gives to man is neither reduced nor despised. Sex is then linked to the highest spiritual sources of joy, and thereby experienced with a *thousand times greater intensity*. There is an intimate connection between *Seligkeit* (felicity) and *Seele* (the soul). The most elementary condition of all true spiritual culture is *the training of the will*, —not that weak surrender to instinct and illusion through which man ultimately becomes the slave of the outer world and of his own physical and nervous condition!

APPENDIX

A considerable number of writings in defence of Neo-Malthusian principles have appeared since the foregoing section was completed. The influence of these works is peculiarly insidious, because the suggestions they contain are put forward, not in the interests of individual self-indulgence, but in the interests of *eugenics or racial hygiene*, and in the name of *the emancipation of women* from the burden of excessive childbirth—more especially among the poor.

When, in spite of such considerations, I persist in retaining my convictions, it is perfectly clear to me that I shall be separating myself from the pre-

vailing tendencies of the age. Along with the disappearance of belief in a spiritual world arises the danger that even earnest and noble men and women will be influenced in their consideration of the deeper things of life by the newest and most tangible facts alone, and will be inaccessible to all arguments going beyond the scope of mere practical sense and expediency. It would appear as if the preponderance of an intellect directed towards external things destroyed not only belief in the invisible world in a religious sense, but also undermined the power of grasping the full value and reality of certain *imponderabilia* in earthly life, and of understanding the deep-growing spiritual injuries which may proceed from apparently harmless and even outwardly beneficial things. Closely connected with this is the method of the typical modern reformer (which might be illustrated by a number of examples taken from this book)—a method according to which he bases his suggestions upon some particular evil which is fully described and emphasized, the attention of the public being thereby totally distracted from the consideration of the possibly much greater evils which may lie behind the immediate and obvious advantages which the reformer himself offers!

It is a main argument of the Neo-Malthusians that the prevention of conception is no more than a continuation of the great process of civilisation—the subjection of nature to reason. This is a piece of pure sophistry. In the foregoing remarks we have already pointed out that the artificial restriction of the family is anything but a triumph of the spirit over natural forces. It is merely a mechanical

prevention of certain natural consequences of these forces, and it must contribute towards subjecting man still further to the dominion of these forces, since it removes those important restrictions which nature herself has set in the way of natural sexual impulses. We do not go so far as to assert that married people should not come together unless they have the intention and the possibility of producing a child; genuine love is an equally justifiable motive for the consummation of their passion. But the conscious, deliberate prevention of conception brings an entirely new factor into the whole sex-relationship. It introduces an element of technical routine into that which should be as far removed as possible from all routine; it represents a concentration upon the mere mechanism of sexual love—a side of life which should be veiled over with a spiritual garment and not be dragged forward into the forefront of our consciousness and made the object of a special technique. Practices of this kind cannot be carried on without a gradual coarsening and disintegration of feeling, in consequence of which (especially in the man) sensibilities will be dulled which can hardly be described in words, but which are of decisive importance for the whole spiritual and moral nature, particularly on the sexual side. In the sexual organisation of the man there is always a danger that the mere impulse towards sexual gratification will break loose from all other physiological and spiritual aspects of sexual life. All deeper masculine education—not least man's education through womanly feeling—has tended to restrain the merely sensual element and

to unite the brute instinct with a whole world of higher sensibilities which veil it over and place it more or less in the mental background. But what is the part played by the artificial prevention of conception? It drags this brute element, this thirst for mere sensual gratification, away from its spiritual and moral associations, its great redeeming and sanctifying influences, thereby producing a spiritual injury of incalculable seriousness—an injury the very essence of which is the liberation of the natural from the controlling spiritual. Pure-minded women are often the least able to understand this point of view, because they are either lacking in sensual feeling or their sensuality is of a much more refined type than that of the man. Practices of this kind will therefore be much less injurious to them than to their husbands. Their influence upon the man's whole erotic nature is profoundly corrupting. Our arm-chair "sexual reformers" do not go out of their way to consider this; they have not the faintest notion of the spiritual foundation of racial health, and cannot realise that the psycho-therapeutical standpoint is here of great importance. Even supposing that the adoption of Neo-Malthusian principles would really lead to the suppression of unsound children and to the breeding of a large number of healthy children,[1] there would still remain

[1] This is an illusion on the part of the Neo-Malthusians. It is very probable that it is precisely the healthiest couples who would make chief use of the means for the prevention of conception, since they would feel themselves most hindered by children in their enjoyment of all the good things of life. Is it not a fact that robust sporting women frequently object very strongly to the restrictions of motherhood, while delicate women often exhibit the most ntense desire for children? What a mistake to suppose that the idea of eugenics would serve as a regulating principle under these circumstances!

the decisive question: Would not this practice operate, physiologically and psychologically, in such a fashion as to corrupt the whole sphere of sex, and produce such a degeneration of natural instinct, such a disturbance of higher erotic feelings, that in the course of a few generations even the best human material would become physically, psychically and nervously degenerate, as a consequence of this disintegrating tendency? These possibilities do not occur to the advocates of Neo-Malthusianism. Like so many other modern reformers, they are Utopians and shallow optimists, who refuse to perceive the darker side of human nature, and have no concrete perception of all the lower tendencies in man which such practices would liberate and morbidly stimulate.

It is the living consciousness of such dangers which is at the back of the high-principled resistance which the Roman Church has offered, from the very beginning, to all these practices. In the future this question will come more and more to the front, and we shall witness a remarkable spectacle. We shall see the Church (which has always been accused of undervaluing natural life and natural laws) defending, out of deep love for the human soul, the rights of nature and of unconscious life against the preponderance of a morbid artificiality and calculation in the sphere of sex.

The strong sense of responsibility which characterises many advocates of Neo-Malthusianism is, moreover, a heritage from generations who were trained in an atmosphere totally different from that of modern life, which, in spite of its social efforts, is at bottom profoundly individualistic, and the disintegrating intellectualism of which necessarily leads to the artificial restriction of the family.

It will perhaps be said in reply that my own position also involves a great optimism. Will men, for such intangible reasons, really abandon the exceedingly immediate and practical advantages and pleasures which the artificial restriction of the family places within their grasp? Believe me, I am under no such illusion. My remarks are addressed to a small circle who will understand my meaning without further explanation. I do not for a moment doubt that the modern devices for the prevention of conception will spread like wildfire. But we shall not have long to wait for the results. Then the time will come when large masses of men and women will again enrol themselves under the protection of those great principles which are to-day scorned and rejected!

CHAPTER VIII

SEX AND HEALTH

FOR some time very considerable interest has been excited in the medical world by a new theory of the well-known Viennese doctor, Freud, with regard to the sexual origin of nervous disturbances. This is a matter of no small importance for educators and ethicists, for, according to this view, it is more particularly the ethical inhibitory ideas in the region of sex which are the essential source of the nervous disturbances. Freud has, moreover, recently expounded his hypothesis in a non-medical paper (*Sexualprobleme*, March 1908).

Freud makes use of a distinction between "natural" and "civilised" sexual morality; he regards the former as directed towards health and efficiency in life, while the latter, on the other hand, aims at the adaptation of man to the work of civilised society. The contention is that "civilised" morality, by reason of the sacrifice which it demands from the individual, is capable of so seriously injuring his health and natural efficiency that in the end civilisation itself suffers injury. To Freud it appears a matter of course that the increasing nervousness which is found in highly civilised communities is chiefly to be referred to our civilised sexual morality: civilisation rests upon the repression of instinct,

which in its turn demands a conversion of sexual feeling into other psychic channels, and for this conversion, even in the case of the best constitutions, only a certain amount of energy is at hand, and those who cannot afford this fall into neurosis or some form of sexual perversity. In such cases (according to Freud) the repressed sex-instinct revenges itself in the following fashion: instead of simply being absorbed by higher interests, its control demands an abnormal amount of spiritual and nervous force, and yet at the same time no more than a quite outward inhibition is the result. The repressed instinct operates, however, inwardly, and its perverted efforts at self-assertion constitute that which we call nervousness, or more specifically psycho-neurosis.

That in the case of certain natures the suppression of powerful sexual needs is capable of giving rise to nervous crises is in the highest degree probable. The real point at issue is the consequences which will or can be drawn from this fact. In any case it would be a serious mistake wholly to reject Freud's suggestions while merely calling upon the numerous assurances of medical authorities to the effect that sexual abstinence is in no way injurious to health. It should rather be clearly laid down, as a matter of principle, that *our ethical position with regard to the problem of sex must not in any case be allowed to depend upon the variable theories of medical science*—whether these theories are favourable or otherwise to continence. So-called scientific theory is in this case an insecure foundation, because here it is not a question of tangible relationships capable of purely experi-

mental verification, but of highly complicated questions on the borderland of psychology and neurology. Almost anything can be denied or asserted according to whatever point of view happens to be fashionable at the time. If, to-day, the whole medical world were to be unanimous in asserting the non-injurious character of sexual abstinence, who could say that to-morrow we should not witness a new tendency, which in the course of a few years, by opening up hitherto unperceived points of view, would turn the medical world in the opposite direction? A stricter theory of knowledge would be useful to many representatives of medical science; they would then, perhaps, cease to speak so confidently of "scientific opinions" in spheres of life where an exact scientific result on a basis of fact is quite out of the question. A man's statements with regard to his own most private conduct with respect to sex are in the highest degree unreliable; nay, many men would give misleading information in this respect without knowing it. And with regard to the tracing back of specific nervous or psychic phenomena to sexual causes, the *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* lies only too near. A reliable establishment of cause and effect is quite impossible, and even if in occasional cases something of the kind could be established with anything like certainty, no general conclusions could be based upon these cases. With regard to Freud's method of psycho-analysis, the more recent investigations dealing with the *Psychologie der Aussage* (the psychology of the questioning method) point to the need for very great caution, which is all the more urgent because here we have to deal with people whose mental

equilibrium has already been more or less affected, and in whose cases the suggestive influence of the questioner would be even more than usually powerful. There is therefore nothing really conclusive, either positive or negative, to be said as to the hygienic effect of sexual abstinence. This must be so if only for the reason that in this case we must take into account *not only the possible immediate hygienic consequences, but also all those further consequences for health associated with the increase or diminution of man's spiritual control over his physical and psychical conditions.* It might very well be the case that as a result of sexual abstinence a man could bring about certain nervous crises, but in return for this acquire a firmness of character which would place him beyond the power of nerve-disturbing results of a much more serious nature. On the other hand, it might very well be that through a surrender to sexual impulse a man could momentarily avoid certain nervous troubles, at the same time lapsing into a weak-willed condition which would put him at the mercy of all the hidden pathological tendencies to which he might be subject, and would above all else bring him into situations incomparably more injurious to his psychic health than any of the lesser difficulties, the avoidance of which had been the dominating principle of his sexual conduct. Freud admits that some hygienic disadvantages of abstinence may be accompanied by decisive social and cultural advantages; he omits to perceive, however, that *the problem of hygiene itself is in this sphere vastly more complicated than according to his theories it would appear to be.* The "civilised" form of sexual morality may ulti-

mately prove more advantageous, *hygienically*, than the merely "natural," which considers immediate consequences only, and overlooks the exceedingly important effect which great imperative ideals and spiritual life-aims have upon human health.[1] There are other dangers to health besides those of a sexual nature! Against these, too, we have to arm ourselves; nature and civilisation threaten our organisms and souls daily with a thousand irritations, interferences, and inhibitions, in the face of which we need an extraordinary measure of spiritual firmness and initiative. For this reason, is it not quite reasonable to suppose that temporary or permanent sexual continence, just because it offers the most difficult task to our most personal will-power, would also most decisively contribute to train us to firmness over against every kind of inner and outer feeling and irritation, and that the difficulty which this carries with it is a sacrifice whose blessings are incomparably superior to all its disadvantages? A mere yielding to lower impulse must always lead ultimately to *a disintegration of strength*.

Taking all the foregoing into consideration, we could readily afford to admit that sexual abstinence carries with it certain disadvantages from the point of view of health, and that in the case of certain temperaments, it may even lead to serious disturbances, while at the same time emphasizing that these observations (even if they were perfectly reliable) have no power of conviction in the face of all the

[1] This point of view has recently been brought forward with great effect by two French curative pedagogues, Payot and Levy, in their works on the education of the will.

profound hygienic and social advantages which attach to the old ethic.[1]

Motherhood, too, is full of hygienic dangers and injuries, and the mother's love, with its sleepless nights, its anxiety and its sacrifice, represents the exact opposite of a mere regard for personal health; yet we do not fear lest these considerations should at any time lead to a reversal of values with regard to motherhood. Freud might perhaps say, in this case, that behind all these sacrifices there stands an instinct, the satisfaction of which makes for health. But we may say also that behind self-conquest in the sphere of sex there stands a mighty instinct, the neglect of which would very likely operate in a far more disturbing and nerve-straining fashion than disobedience with regard to physical instinct; this instinct is the human impulse towards *spiritual self-assertion*, mastery over the mere moment, an impulse the explanation of which—altogether apart from anything metaphysical—lies in the decisive importance, which, in the case of man (far more than in that of any animal), attaches to the rule of the spirit over the impulses of the moment.

Freud does not, however, confine his doctrines of the danger of the repression of instinct to the domain of sex. If it be applied in this wider fashion, together with all the alarming exaggeration

[1] Consider, for example, that hunger, or an insufficiently nutritious diet, is injurious to health; yet we demand from whole masses of people that they should rather suffer such injury than do violence to other people's property. For we know that ultimately economic need itself would become immensely enhanced if there was no strict regulation with respect to property. In this case, too, we see that the civilised order is more suited to the physical preservation of man than is the natural condition—the mere following of the instinct for acquisition!

with which Freud converts certain secondary phenomena into the chief factors of life and death, then the whole absurdity of the theory becomes clearly apparent. Youth would then be the most unhealthy age, in consequence of the many instincts which the educator represses and limits; and those historical epochs which were noted for powerful faith, stern discipline, and fixed customs, and therefore raised whole masses of people in an unusual degree beyond any slavery to instinct, must, from the medical standpoint, have been the most decadent periods! The latter days of the Roman Empire should have been, on the other hand, full of activity and spiritual health! Consider, too, all the elevating and health-preserving professions in which the need for sleep and rest, for society and confidence, for movement and relaxation, must be largely repressed, and all the great aims in life which cannot be reached without serious deprivations and denials of all kinds, and yet see how these aims in particular are great sources of life-energy and nervous strength! Moreover, sexual "freedom" does not in reality in the least represent the ideal hygienic condition of unrepressed instincts which Freud advocates; it is no more than a state in which *higher* instincts are repressed through the agency of *lower* instincts. The existence of strong unsatisfied impulses would therefore not be removed even by means of Freud's so-called "natural" sex morality—it would merely be transposed from one part of our nature to another. Is it not a fact that human nature carries in itself ineradicable spiritual and moral needs which under this "natural" morality would suffer more seriously

than can the elementary physiological instincts under the demands of "civilised" morality? And spiritual depression is often capable of undermining even man's physical health more seriously than any mere physiological or nervous disturbances. For example, is not the impulse towards self-respect, which is most deeply attacked through sexual laxity and impulsiveness, at the same time an instinct whose repression can very injuriously affect the nervous system and even the circulation of the blood?

It would be easier to recognise an element of truth in Freud's theories if he had confined himself to stating that, in the case of certain dispositions and certain circumstances, sexual continence may lead to serious nervous disturbances. But in this case we should have to lay great stress on the "certain dispositions," in order, at the very commencement to call attention to the fact that the sexual restraint itself is not to be fixed upon as the real cause, but only as a factor allowing a weakness which was already present to demonstrate itself. In the second place, we should like to quote a saying of Björnson's: "Let thy mind be exclusively occupied with whatsoever thou willst, and it can lead thee to thy ruin!"

There are men who, on moral grounds, withhold themselves from all actual immorality, but at the same time dwell in their thoughts upon that which their conscience will not allow them to practise: there can be no manner of doubt that such a state of mind as this must have a highly injurious effect upon the nervous system. It would be quite another

matter, however, to admit that weak-willed and inconsistent individuals of this sort would be restored to health by sexual "freedom";[1] in many cases the whole situation would then merely sink a stage deeper, the man would live a "normal life" in the sexual sense, while his imagination went beyond that into the artificial or perverse, again giving rise to irritation and the existence of unfulfilled desires, as in the previous state of sexual abstinence. The cause of the nervous disturbance, therefore, in these cases does not lie in the abstinence as such, but either in an abnormal disposition or merely in a hypertrophy of the imagination due to defective education and self-education. Often both these factors are operative. For such persons abstinence is consequently relatively the healthiest, as long as they do not marry, because every moral resistance imparts some sort of inner firmness, whereas characterless surrender makes such people (in every other sphere too) into weak-willed slaves, and offers opportunity to every sort of morbid tendency—just as the earth worms crawl forth from their holes when the weather grows damp.

From this point of view there can be no doubt that the modern theory of "living one's nature out" is largely responsible for the nervous degeneration of to-day, and that the widespread hysteria in modern life does not spring from those remnants of discipline and idealism which are still operative amongst us. One is compelled to ask indeed with astonishment,

[1] In order to avoid all misunderstanding, it should be pointed out that Freud himself does not go so far as to suggest that our already existent state of psycho-neurosis could be cured by mere sexual intercourse. See Freud, *Sammlung kleiner Schriften zur Neurosenlehre*, 1906, p. 216.

with what right Freud finds the dangers of repression so alarming in an age which is conspicuous for self-indulgence. In reality there has never been an age which was less influenced by the spirit of abnegation and repression than is our own. The present age is one of disintegration, in which natural instincts have largely broken away from their controlling higher ideals; if, therefore, it suffers to a peculiar degree from nervousness, one can hardly look for the cause in the fact that it constitutes a high-water mark of control and discipline. The precisely opposite conclusion would be nearer the mark.

There is one point, however, in which one can entirely agree with Freud, or at any rate allow oneself, through him, to be led to the recognition of an important psychological and pedagogical truth. There are to-day certain circles who cling to the old ethical tradition only through considerations of an outward description, as the result of a species of timidity which keeps them from breaking with respectable customs; and yet these people are, at the bottom of their hearts, believers in a view of life of a totally different description—one which attaches no value or meaning to self-mastery and self-denial. It goes without saying that self-repression upon such a basis as this is highly unhealthy. Almost equally unsatisfactory is the attempt to overcome sexual instincts with a *mere abstract ethic.* Great and living ideals which replace the self-indulgent conception of life at the very root, setting the spiritual nature in the centre of the whole Ego, are alone capable of giving rise to a really healthy and success-

ful counteraction of the merely animal instincts. It is of the utmost importance that the soul should itself be lifted above the sphere of desire, and that the conflict for self-mastery shall not lose its definite meaning. The mere repression of strong impulses and needs (of any description) without a deeper treatment of their psychological sources, and without a diversion of their energies into other channels, must doubtless, in the case of many natures, lead to grave psychic and nervous disturbance. The aim should be to liberate the active principle and give it expression on a higher plane: the only right pedagogical course is to represent every act of inhibition and repression as a means towards the liberation of a stronger and more valuable spiritual life, and thereby place all self-limitation in an active relationship to *a great view of life as a whole;* in this way the impression of a restriction of life is removed, and the energy in question yoked to higher purposes. Consider from this point of view, for example, the Platonic treatment of the soul, more particularly with respect to the sensuous impulses, and the Christian ideas of the "higher life"—the *ego sum vita*—and one will understand the deep pedagogy with which really earnest philosophy and religion approaches the psychological and physiological difficulties which are connected with the controlling of all powerful instincts. This great accomplishment of the religious view of life is to be perceived also in the case of the protection of man against the nerve-disturbing influence of evil human destiny—illness, &c.: in order to counteract the restricting and devitalising effect of such events, it

represents to man that there is another far higher life than that which is bound up with earthly success, and teaches him to employ earthly suffering and failure as the opportunity and means for higher spiritual development. Thus Thomas à Kempis teaches us that we should love even the failure of our undertakings, namely, as the means of leading us away from an excessive self-security, and as helps to a success of a higher kind, to the growth of spiritual forces which lift men above all the accidents of fate, aud make them independent of external things. Such an altered spiritual attitude towards repression is often decisive as regards its effect upon our whole nature. It is therefore all a question of linking the apparently passive endurance and abnegation to a great active tendency of the will, relating it to its aims. Our object must be for every sacrifice to bring into the consciousness clear equivalents of a higher description, so that there is no crucifixion without a resurrection. Sensuous instincts often continue to work in the sub-conscious self, and it is hence also important that they should not be treated merely rationally, but above all by means of ideas which—like the religious ideas—themselves come from the deepest foundations of the soul, and therefore possess power in regions lying altogether beyond the mere intellect: William James has drawn particular attention to this fact in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*. Finally, it is our task to meet the force (and especially the psychic influence) of these feelings and instincts with ideas of a strengthening and calming character. In this connection we may mention not only the great

religious writers, but the Stoics, and Spinoza (in his remarks on the overcoming of the passions).

We are quite prepared to admit that in the case of particular dispositions, or in the case of an inadequate strength and development of the spiritual counteracting factors, the repression of strong instincts and needs may lead to nervous disturbance. But disturbances of this kind are associated with every discrepancy between desire and fulfilment, and may manifest themselves in other spheres far more severely than in that of sex; yet at the same time the moral necessity of the repression is not removed. Moreover, even if the desires in question be scrupulously gratified, the nervous disturbance, in the case of such natures, is only temporarily set aside and not really eliminated: the difficulty can therefore best be met by a deeper psychological treatment of the problems of self-control and abnegation.

Freud commits his chief blunder when he raises what may, under certain circumstances, be an auxiliary factor in nervous disturbance to a position of altogether undue importance, and at the same time fails to realise the monstrous consequences which result from his premises, consequences which, as a matter of fact, reduce his theory to an absurdity. We may point out, for example, that from his point of view every deeper civilisation should lead to universal hysteria, since it demands an increasing dominion of the spirit over instinct and passion. It would, however, be very much nearer the mark to say that a new sex ethic which sought, on hygienic grounds, to eliminate the element of firm discipline,

would exercise an extremely weakening influence on the human nervous system and immensely increase the tendency towards hysteria.

Freud is very far indeed from realising the immense hygienic and cultural importance of the controlling of sensual instincts. On the other hand, he represents the effect of sexual abstinence on the nervous system in a manner which is absolutely devoid of scientific foundation. It is fortunately the fact that on the medical side, too, Freud's theory has met with sharp opposition, and at the best it is looked upon as a hypothesis resting upon no adequate scientific basis.

On reading Freud's works, upon which these remarks are based, one receives an overpowering impression to the effect that, in spite of the apparent realism, we have to do with a man who is not an impartial student of real life, but a theorist who builds up his hypothesis upon certain one-sided impressions of his own ; he thus loses the power of carefully and impartially examining and estimating the phenomena of life. Notwithstanding many penetrating remarks and ingenious conclusions, the final impression is that of being led away from a really healthy sense of reality which would assign each separate fact its right place in our conception of life as a whole. Thus one loses confidence even in that which at first appealed to one as correct, and feels afraid that nothing is being seen in its right perspective and properly related to the whole. Moreover, a nerve-doctor, who sees, for the most part, only the darker side of sexual life, is from the very beginning extremely liable to construct his views upon his

abnormal experience alone, and thus unconsciously to pervert the truth.

Thus Freud paints a depressing picture of the marriages of those who have previously lived continent lives, and calls upon other doctors to corroborate his impressions. As if there were not countless happy marriages of which we hear nothing—just because they are normal and happy—and the contracting parties in which, having preserved their purity before marriage, have thereby retained a greater capacity for a union of true love than those who have sold their spiritual birthright for a mess of pottage! And, moreover, Freud appears to have quite left out of sight the *infinitely greater suffering* which only too often results from the physical, psychological, moral, and other evils which are brought into married life as a consequence of premarital sexual relationships.

The monogamic ethic, with all its limitations and consequences, is certainly not a system which in this imperfect world corresponds to every possible need and satisfies all the hungry ones; on the contrary, by reason of the necessary exclusiveness of its claims and forms, it condemns many men and women to more or less sexual abnegation, and must give rise to many severe struggles and crises. But we should not wish humanity to pass through a phase of free love in order to learn, through bitter experience, which is the lesser evil, and what a terrible accumulation of evil, disease, degeneration, brutality, and lack of character must be produced by this so-called "natural" morality—that is, by the dominance of mere natural impulse in the sphere

of sex. "Sulzer! What does he know about this damned race?"; thus spoke Frederick the Great of an arm-chair philanthropist. One might say the same of all those reformers who conceive it possible to grant sexual freedom without in a short time totally destroying the moral and cultural work of many centuries.

When one considers the entire insufficiency of the observations and the audacious character of the conclusions upon which a one-sided theorist wishes to shelve the whole moral tradition, the result of profound experience and deep psychological knowledge, as a mere error injurious to health, one is forced to ask oneself: Where is all this reforming individualism going to lead us? Even the sceptically disposed will say to themselves that after all it is the better course to leave such fanciful hypotheses, and again place ourselves under the leadership of genuine conscience, which gives us true guidance in the centre of the soul, reminding us of our spiritual destiny and causing us to value that welfare of the soul, which is more important than all the petty anxiety about health by the aid of which a perverted science would rob man of his highest dignity.

All these hygienic and scientific fears as to the danger of manly self-discipline often seem to us no more than an "academic hypochondria," divorced from healthy human instincts, and in fact itself a sign of nervous degeneration. This may sound hard, but in truth there are a number of modern reformers who make one despair of the spiritual sanity of the human race. It is essential for our safety that a clear distinction should be made

between such tendencies as these and really sound and fruitful criticism.[1]

[1] In America and in Switzerland a number of educators have begun to take up Freud's *Psycho-Analyse*. The peculiar danger of Freud's theories and methods lies in the fact that they present an inextricable mixture of truth and falsehood. It is true that sexual experiences and impressions of various kinds may lead to nervous and mental disturbances and diseases. It is false that in Freud's psycho-analysis (or in the further developed methods of his pupils) we have any really reliable method of discovering and interpreting these mental complexes. The incredibly foolish nature of many of the interpretations arrived at by this psycho-analytical method have done more than anything else to expose its unreliability. It is false, too, that an excessive occupation with such sexual experiences and the dragging of them up from the subconscious to the conscious mind, is of decisive curative importance. Precisely the opposite is the case. And even in those cases in which temporarily, or for a considerable time, such an analysis of their psychic state apparently cures hysterical people, it will nevertheless be perceived in the long-run that such an occupation with the subconscious mind is accompanied by deeply injurious mental results. In the case of the subjects of this process, the author has frequently received an impression as if the living soul had been taken out and an artificial one put in its place. The majority of modern pathologists are unfortunately lacking in a wide psychological and educational training ; they observe partial phenomena and practise partial methods, without understanding the life of the soul *as a whole*, and without properly allowing for the effect of their treatment upon the whole life of the patient. An earnest religious care of the soul would produce the desired influence upon the subconscious mind more permanently, and more effectively than their mechanical methods, which are both dangerous and inadequate. The psycho-analytical pathologist does not know what to do with his mental complexes when he has dragged them up from the subconscious region. Religion knows this dark world well enough, but it does not throw open the gates of Hades; it pours in purifying, harmonising, calming thoughts and forces. At the same time, it is of course admitted that the representative of the religious care of souls may learn much from the pathologist; but with regard to the one-sided and hypothetical suggestions which have recently came from this quarter it would be well to preserve the greatest reserve and the most critical calmness.

CHAPTER IX

THE INDISPENSABILITY OF THE ASCETIC IDEAL

THE replies which have been given in the foregoing chapters to various modern theories for the reformation of sexual relationships, amount in essence to the following:

All solutions of the sex problem which tend to emancipate sex feeling from the control of moral and spiritual law (instead of making it the chief aim to place the spirit in a position of mastery over the sex nature), are essentially hostile, not only to our whole social evolution and to the development of individual character, but to actual physical health in the sphere of sex. To secure the mastery of man's higher self over the whole world of animal desire is a task, however, which demands a more systematic development of will-power and the cultivation of a deeper faith in the spiritual destiny of humanity than are to be found in the superficial intellectualistic civilisation of to-day. To achieve such a result it will be necessary not only to have recourse to new methods and new ideals, but to make sure that we do not allow what is valuable and in any way worthy of imitation, in the old, to be forgotten. The ascetic principle, in particular, is to-day in danger of being undervalued.

Asceticism should be regarded, not as a negation of nature nor as an attempt to extirpate natural forces, but as practice in the art of self-discipline. Its object should be to show humanity what the human will is capable of performing, to serve as an encouraging example of the conquest of the spirit over the animal self. The contempt which has been poured upon the idea of asceticism in recent times has contributed more than anything else towards effeminacy. Nothing could be more effective in bringing humanity back to the best traditions of manhood than a respect for the spiritual strength and conquest which is symbolised in ascetic lives.

It may well be true that in the history of asceticism there have been absurdities and abuses. But this must not blind us to the eternal value of complete self-conquest in the task of attaining true inner freedom. The orgies of the French Revolution do not discredit the principle of political freedom. Neither should the occasional excesses of individuals, or even the degenerate condition of whole epochs, prevent us from appreciating the educational value of the ascetic principle and the inspiration and encouragement which come from contemplating the lives of the great saints.

In this chapter I propose to deal with the *social and psychological value* of the ascetic ideal. By the ascetic ideal is meant that view of life which does not simply regard self-conquest as a stage in self-development, but which assigns a definite and essential function in the evolution of humanity to men and women who shall demonstrate, in one sphere or another, the possibility of living a life of con-

tinual and complete abnegation—not in order to make a more natural life appear contemptible, but with the express purpose of enriching life and preserving it from degeneration by means of heroic examples of spiritual power. Properly to understand the significance of asceticism, it should be remembered that natural life does not flourish unless the spirit retains the upper hand; and since we are surrounded for the most part by striking examples of lives in which the spirit plays anything but a leading part, it is in the highest degree desirable that living and striking examples of men and women who have fully freed themselves from the distraction of the world and the domination of natural desires should be continually before our eyes. The vast majority of modern men will see nothing but matter for laughter in such an ideal as this. Even earnest and spiritually minded people regard it as an obsolete and erroneous view, which must soon give place to a more harmonious conception of life. I am, however, profoundly convinced that this attitude is the product of a shallow understanding of actual human nature. Ignorance of the awful dangers latent in our weak nature is very commonly to be met with in epochs still powerfully influenced by great traditions of moral discipline. Those born in such periods are apt to be lacking in personal acquaintance with the darker side of human nature, owing to the very state of discipline into which their fellow-citizens have been brought. Hence they fail to realise what a laborious taming of passion has preceded the comparative security they find around them. Time will soon give us a

demonstration on a large scale of what men can be like when undisciplined.

In the sphere of sex a rapid disintegration of character is already going on. The effect of the increasing laxity in this direction will make itself felt in other directions. A disrespect for definite moral standards in this region will tend to initiate a spirit of license in every other department of social and moral life. It is astounding with what rapidity all moral convictions are to-day breaking down in the minds of vast masses of the people. This would not occur if the deepest foundations of these convictions had not been long undermined. The suggestive force of tradition continues to be operative in an age which has largely abandoned the positive belief lying behind the tradition, and this deceives us as to the real extent of the disintegration. The first vigorous push shows us how far the process of undermining has gone.

Without most people being conscious of the fact, one of the main foundation-stones of our traditional moral culture has been the constant presence in our midst of great personalities illustrating in their own lives the highest possible degree of spiritual freedom, the complete conquest of the spirit over the world and the senses. The presence in society of such spiritually dedicated characters is a source of psychic inspiration for the whole community, and a constant and courageous protest against the smug Philistinism of the men of the world. The true building up of moral ideals and the chief stimulus towards their fulfilment come from the embodiment of the spiritual life in its most perfect form in heroic human life,

and not from any kind of merely intellectual demonstration.

A belief in the spiritual destiny of man—no mere dream, but a belief confirmed and strengthened by the lives of great spiritual geniuses—is the first necessity in arousing and developing a spiritual conscience in the human race, a sense of the bounden duty of resisting the lower self. Unless this feeling has been brought into being, morality itself has no deep soil in which to take root. There could be no greater aid to its creation than the spectacle of men who can pursue spiritual things with a more powerful passion than that with which men of the world follow after gold, fame, and women.

These ultimate inspirations of all great self-mastery may be hidden from consciousness for generations; they nevertheless continue to perform their work and to supply the higher aspirations with their final authority and reality. But one day the world of sensuous impulses will again raise itself in opposition to the dominion of the spirit, and a fresh sophistry will undermine the last foundations of spiritual dignity; then humanity will again discover the real bases of civilisation and realise the impotence of all moral culture (in the absence of these inspirations) over against the influence of more tangible things. These spiritual factors grow more and more indispensable the greater becomes the disturbing influence of outer things, and the more the uniting communal nature of man gives way to individual instincts, feelings, interests and fancies, which carry in themselves no fixed norm.

It is from this point of view that we should consider the charge of retirement from the world and opposition to nature, which has always been brought against the ascetic ideal of life by those who regard it as a fruitless and weakening error. Every moral action is in a certain sense a resistance to nature and an overcoming of the world, and therefore needs the suggestive influence of elevated and perfect examples of self-mastery, in order, through a connection with such tangible embodiments of the spiritual life, to be equal to the power of the outer world, and to the task of retaining faith in the right and possibility of resistance to mere nature.

There is an Indian saying: "Humanity waits upon the sacrifice of those who overcome the world, as the hungry young birds wait upon their mother." This is a very drastic expression of the manner in which the world depends upon those who can rise superior to it; it gives voice to the intense desire for spiritual strength on the part of those who are occupied with the tragedies and difficulties of their own lives—a desire which can be satisfied only by those who have attained to complete freedom. It is an eternal fact that humanity continually scorns and rejects the high, and yet at the same time dimly realises that it cannot master its own life without the illumination and power coming from thence. Therefore the demonstration of a complete overcoming of the world is in no sense an attack upon life—rather is it a contribution towards life. In the face of the immense suggestive power of wealth, of ambition, and of every kind of sensuous temptation, humanity cannot dispense with the counteracting

suggestion of a life which has made itself absolutely independent of all these things.

As is well known, it was the Franciscan movement which gave rise to the so-called Third Order : the members of this order were permitted to live in the world, to carry on business and to marry ; but they were required at the same time, through specific vows, to honour the saints to whom their order was dedicated, and they were enjoined throughout their economic and family life never to lose sight of the spiritual destiny of man. This Third Order symbolises the influence of the ascetic ideal upon real life ; it shows the manner in which this ideal provides our earthly existence with an access of power—not the least of its services being the strengthening of the individual spirit against the confused world of human instincts and feelings.

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From this point of view the saints are of imperishable importance in the world of education. They illuminate and demonstrate the teaching of CHRIST in many and varied directions, at the same time linking it up with human life. In order to avoid every misunderstanding, I must make it clear that I do not ask Protestant ministers or teachers simply to take over Catholic doctrines, customs, or institutions. They cannot, however, afford to neglect the *psychology and pedagogy* which lie behind the Catholic system ; these must be thoroughly understood and valued, in order that the broader view of life which thus results should give rise to something of a corresponding nature within the framework of the Protestant tradition.

With regard to the question of asceticism; I should not expect Protestants to undertake the worship of the saints, but they might well make the heroic lives and achievements of those men and women, who dedicated themselves to the Church, fruitful for Christian worship and for the development of will and character. Indeed we are driven in this direction by the simplest fundamental truth of all moral education—*the decisive importance of example.* "Thou shalt" is indeed great and important: but not less important is the "Thou canst," which is forced upon us by a mighty and consistent example. It is indeed true that we need in the first place the perfect example of CHRIST Himself, in which the higher is revealed in its entire purity; but in another sense we need also the encouragement of personalities more closely related to our weakness and error, and who have nevertheless attained to inner freedom in so impressive a manner. That the human soul should never be without a secret desire for absolute perfection bears witness to the divine light within us: even in a mistaken character, such as Nietzsche, this desire clamoured for expression, and created the idea of the superman as a protest against a deadening materialism and a cheap and levelling education. This desire is enormously stimulated by the heroic consistency with which these great Christians worked out its possibilities, if one may use such an expression, and made into a complete whole all that which remains so weak and incomplete in our own Christian life. From the immense earnestness and decision of such heroes there radiates a suggestive

influence of incomparable power, strengthening the shifting will of the ordinary man; on this point Hilty justly remarks (*Neue Briefe*, p. 135); "From a fear of the 'excesses of the Catholic Church at the time of the Reformation, we have rejected the veneration of the saints, and in this manner have lost a powerful stimulus for good; for men learn more willingly and more easily from examples than from sermons. . . . But a time is coming in which the true saints of the Catholic Church will be better known to us than has been the case in the past."

From the fact that recent Protestant writers, like Sabatier and Thode, have devoted much thorough study to the life of St. Francis of Assisi, we may perceive that the period of mere neglect has come to an end. The Church of England has always attached a high value to the lives of the saints, both for sermons and for educational purposes, and has drawn no small inspiration from this source; it has recently paid peculiar attention to the legends of St. Francis, and has issued good editions of these works for its priests and educators. What reason is there, indeed, why our youth should be brought up upon legends and biographies from the antique world? Why should they be intimately acquainted with the deeds of Hercules, and yet be practically ignorant of the life of St. Francis or of St. Vincent de Paul, who stand incomparably nearer to our social and spiritual needs?

A modern philosopher (I refer to H. von Stein, whose too early death was so deplorable) has drawn attention in his later works to the imperishable

significance of the lives of the saints. Attracted to their study through Schopenhauer, he discovered behind every negation their mighty positive element, their gift to the world and to those who live and struggle in it: "In the highest and noblest," he says, "our experience is unfortunately confined to what is limited and inadequate . . . they, however, experienced in themselves the absolute, and life is nothing when one has not in some fashion or another acquired this experience."

All such thoughts as these have to-day sunk into the background. In the last few centuries mankind has increasingly occupied itself with the question of external freedom, and the personalities of the saints have largely passed into oblivion; but they will again come into the forefront of our consciousness when the most important of all the problems of freedom has again become a central question: "How shall I become free from myself?" This question may from time to time be drowned through the clash of outward interests, but just as the great pyramid of Cheops always majestically reappears, even if it be temporarily veiled by the sandstorms of the desert, so, too, this great question of inner freedom will ever again raise its head above the dust and storm of daily existence, leading man back from all external things to the great problems of his own nature.

But is it not a fact that the lives of the saints abound in exaggerations and eccentricity? What would become of humanity if such types were raised to be authoritative ideals of life? We are quite prepared to admit that there is here much

exaggeration and eccentricity, as indeed there is in the lives of all men of genius. But why should one prefer to allow the genius almost any moral laxity rather than an exaggerated attempt at securing spiritual power? Doubtless because in the first case we are encouraged in our own inadequacy, whereas in the latter the distressing gap between his intense spiritual endeavour and our easy-going lives becomes painfully evident! Moreover, the majority of men are restricted to normal conditions of life, and are able to develop their powers within these limits only. The genius of self-discipline, the saint, does not despise these conditions, nay, he may himself temporarily or wholly exist within them—like St. Louis of France or St. Elizabeth; but in any case he attains to a superhuman inner freedom which cannot be imitated by any- and every-one, but which even for the ordinary man remains an inexhaustible source of encouragement and a species of outer conscience. Rather than venture to call all that eccentric, or even morbid, which goes beyond our own moral power and does not fit within our scheme of life, we should rather acknowledge that throughout the whole of life the visible rests upon the invisible, the ordinary upon the extraordinary, and that we ourselves, in all our customs, our affections and our freedom, are reaping the benefit of these great spiritual conquests over the sensuous world.

It should never be forgotten that behind the purest and sweetest gifts of Nature there often lie the greatest dangers for the character of man—so soon, namely, as we become the slaves of these gifts

instead of maintaining our freedom with regard to them. In family life, for example, there certainly lies a source of the finest human feeling; but this is not unaccompanied by the danger of family egoism and of the destruction of all higher *caritas* and all higher spiritual endeavour. Therefore there should be gifted personalities who know how to sacrifice not only the ugliest but even the most beautiful things in life—not in order to embitter earthly things for man, but in order to liberate them from the dangers of misuse, exaggeration, and over-valuation, which lie ready in man's nature. Of the great followers of CHRIST it may be said that they, too, take the guilt of the world upon themselves; they sacrifice so much because the others are able to sacrifice so little.

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The spirit which animated the great saints was one of pure devotion to GOD. With the penetrating gaze of the purified soul, they saw that a family life not based upon anything higher than earthly love may be no more than a species of extended self-interest; they perceived that blunting of all higher needs which so often accompanies the mere worship of motherhood, that naïve self-expansion and self-reflection in the offspring, that character-destroying exaggeration of outward care, that growing indifference to everything except the welfare of one's own circle, that idolatrous cult of the work of human propagation, without any true and consistent worship of GOD. They knew, too, that children thus loved and thus brought up, in spite of all outer baptism would never possess the true baptism: they

are reared in the flesh and not in the spirit, and therefore they will be ruled by the flesh and not by the higher life of the spirit. Thus the separation of St. Elizabeth from her children, for example, was an extraordinary step; but it was the heroic action of a soul wholly devoted to GOD, who, through such an example, and in the face of the one-sided worship of family life and children, aimed at *pointing out those high goals, in the absence of which family life itself lacks its commanding ideals and the true care of the soul is neglected.* For nothing allows children so to degenerate, and so shuts them out from all higher life, as the fact of being trained in an atmosphere of family egoism, and being brought up by a mother who knows nothing higher than her own offspring. And nothing educates and preserves the children so effectually as the example of a mother who shines with the inspiration of a higher love than that of the natural maternal instincts. Such rare examples of a completely self-forgetful approach to heavenly love, far removed from attacking or lowering human family life, act continually as a wonderful source of sacrificial strength and spiritual dignity, in this way enriching all earthly bonds. Characters like St. Elizabeth, even though, in their enthusiastic devotion to their SAVIOUR, they burst the limits of ordinary family life, are *the protecting spirits of the family;* they bring into domestic life a *deeper loyalty*, a *more self-sacrificing devotion*, and a *more spiritual care*, and protect it from the connection with lower instincts, and thus from disintegration.

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What has just been said with regard to the

ascetic view of life in general must apply also to our valuation of the religious orders. In the lower Franciscan church in Assisi, we see a representation of the threefold sacrifice, poverty, chastity, and obedience, with which Christian asceticism opposes the strongest passions of humanity. These three sacrifices give those living in the world and struggling with the desire for material gain, with sensuality and with personal ambition, a continual reminder of their spiritual origin and a continual assistance against the over-valuation of external things. The earnestness and reality of the spiritual world is strengthened, in an altogether indispensable fashion, by the fact that there are and have been men who voluntarily denied themselves all these things, devoting themselves entirely to spiritual contemplation or Christian charity. And in face of the extraordinary tangibility of outward claims and temptations, what could be more necessary than such a strengthening? In the case of the energetic races of the Western World, occupied as they are so largely with outward and politico-economic activities, such an opposition—on the part of a whole class—to the over-valuation of material things is of the most imperative importance —not least for the health and true productivity of our worldly civilisation itself. What is all *laborare* without the right *orare;* whither leads all creation without self-knowledge and self-recollection and uninspired by those high aims which first enable us to distinguish between primary and secondary things in life, nay, which first enable our whole work to acquire a deeper meaning? "We need

seers and doers," a great American capitalist once said—the true seer, however, indispensably requires such a radical liberation from the goods and illusions of the world and from the turmoil of secular activity, and the ideal of such a liberation (in spite of all "progressive" blindness) will never perish, but will always acquire new strength from the necessities of our social life itself. A modern free-thinking criminalist, who stands entirely on the basis of scientific materialism, has very justly observed: "Only a view of the matter which overlooked the realities of human nature itself, and was blind both to historical and philosophical considerations, could fail to recognise the importance and justification of the religious orders from the point of view of human culture itself." He does not doubt in the least that such retreats as these should play a very important rôle in the regeneration of weak and erring humanity, and in general in the liberation of the soul from the darkness of the past. So that even outside the Ancient Church itself there is again a feeling that it will be necessary to come back to these fundamental ideas and give them a new form. He says, for example:

"Even in the oldest Oriental philosophy we see this spiritual instinct on the part of man, causing him to withdraw from the world and from the corruption of society in order to seek protection against evil and temptation in solitude or in intercourse with similar souls, and, through a life of contemplation and asceticism, gradually to withdraw himself from the demands of the senses. . . . Not less ancient and universal is the conviction, which has

become a regular dogma throughout the Eastern World, that one can best reconcile oneself with the Divine Power through such a retired existence devoted to spiritual elevation. . . . In the Nazarenes the Jews, too, possessed such a body of men, to whom Moses had already granted specific rights. There were also the flourishing Hebrew sects of the Essenes and the Therapeuteans, who were contemporaneous with CHRIST in Palestine and Egypt, and devoted themselves to a life of monastic piety."

In the structure of our book as a whole, these indications of the pedagogical value of the ascetic ideal and of the religious orders are of peculiar importance. Here we may perceive with the greatest clearness the relationship between such a retirement from the world and the needs of secular life itself. We shall thus be able to realise that in the future all these institutions will experience a development and fructification on a grand scale; the more the one-sided cultivation of merely worldly activity breaks down the nervous and psychic force of civilised man and coarsens his moral nature, and the more the increasing cult of the Ego destroys the capacity for true self-denial, the more their indispensability will be recognised.[1]

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The full and permanent resignation of that which

[1] In the nursing profession, too, the Orders with their vows are indispensable. The lack of power constantly exhibited by the Protestant diaconal system [in Germany], as well as on the part of the secular nursing sisters, shows clearly that the supply of spiritual force has been inadequate to the very difficult demands of this kind of work. Hence it frequently occurs that doctors of great experience give the preference to Catholic sisters. There are, of course, numbers of self-sacrificing characters outside the Orders.

for the majority of men alone makes life desirable, has a power of attraction only for the rarest natures, and for this very reason the ascetic type will never lose its honourable position among the people, but will be newly produced and newly honoured in

But the Orders understand how to inspire *mediocre* characters, and to educate them in a magnificent fashion to an almost superhuman degree of self-sacrifice. And the main reason for this superiority on the part of the Catholic sisters is the vow of voluntary celibacy: in the first place, it puts the nurses in quite a different position with regard to the patients and doctors; they cease, indeed, to be women, and become sisters; and, moreover, they have put away the idea of leading lives of their own outside the hospital. This gives them a wholeness, dignity, and sacredness which they would not otherwise be able to acquire. Here, again, we perceive the deep relationship between social service and the ascetic ideal—the close connection between the capacity for the greatest sacrifice, and a form of retirement from the world; we see that only those who have left the "natural man" entirely behind are able to do the best work in many spheres of life.

There are a great many men and women who entirely fail to realise the need for such ascetic examples, because their view of life is not sufficiently realistic to enable them to grasp the actual needs of our human life. Dostojewski once said: "He who does not understand the monk, does not understand the world." It is frequently asked to-day: "Is it not more useful to live in the midst of the world rather than withdraw from its keenest attractions and temptations and make vows of solitude?" But this question is quite irrelevant when we look upon these ascetic figures as *object lessons in spiritual earnestness*, and thus essential to our social and educational work. Certainly it is more difficult to remain quite pure and free in the midst of the world—and this was achieved only by a very few of the greatest saints. The Orders, however, assist men of a more ordinary stamp to attain to this condition of inner peace and of freedom from the fever of needs and passions, a state of mind which they would not achieve if they lived in the world, and one which is not achieved by those who, in the midst of comfortable worldly circumstances, contemplate with superiority this world of discipline and obedience, and feel themselves to be more developed and more useful personalities. There can be no manner of doubt that there are highly developed men and women worthy of the greatest honour who live exemplary lives in commerce, family relationships, and secular activities in general, in the midst of great conflicts and temptations; but along with their burdens and duties they also enjoy all the alleviations and satisfactions which accompany the cares and disappointments of secular life. We must on no account deceive ourselves as to this. Let one but approach these people with the veil or the monk's vow, and they would draw back in horror.

every age: and it is not the most enlightened but the darkest ages of history in which men so forget their own deeply hidden yearning for spiritual freedom and the torment of their actual lack of freedom that they fail to recognise those who overcome the world as social assets of the first rank. Degeneration and abuse of all kinds naturally await all institutions and ideals when they are translated into life, and the highest thoughts and customs will be the most liable to such misuse since they are the furthest removed from the ordinary level of human life. How can it be attempted to refute the institutions of religion, which are indeed the answer to the fundamental weaknesses of human nature, through a reference to abuses which are after all only a new proof of this weakness itself? What would the champions of democracy say if one met the ideal of self-government with a reference to the political corruption of the United States? The radicalism and individualism of our age has not the faintest idea how deeply all the victories of personal freedom over the omnipotence of the state, all the so-called "rights of man," are linked up with this much scorned retirement from the world, which has brought personality to its highest concentration and raised spiritual life above all other aims. It was doubtless the fervour and intensity with which whole groups of individuals left domestic and social life, in order to come entirely to themselves, which first made men conscious, in the most impressive manner, that man has a right to himself—that there is a holiness of inner life and effort, in which society and the state have no right to interfere. Moreover

the right and dignity of the woman, apart from her mere valuation as a sexual being, is closely related to the existence and honourable recognition of bodies of women dedicated to GOD, in which human personality found a safe refuge from the world and all its merely utilitarian aims.[1] Thus these ascetic institutions on closer study reveal themselves as a most powerful support for everything which one may call *character*, and a pillar of that great and true resistance to all that is merely tangible and useful, upon which, ultimately, everything depends which makes life worth living and lends men real power over material things.

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Very interesting from this point of view are the conclusions drawn by Frau Gnauck-Kühne in her penetrating book *Die deutsche Frau* (Berlin, 1904). The authoress here shows us that the deeper problems associated with the woman question cannot be solved without the help of the ideal of the Order, and she shows what a deep understanding of the heart of this question has been acquired by the Catholic Orders through the experience of centuries. One must not leave out of account, she says, that the modern tendencies within the woman's movement which aim at a breaking down of strict monogamy have their origin to no small extent in the fact that it is exceptional for a woman to feel her whole nature satisfied by any mere profession, and that the mere cult of her individuality leaves her deep desire for

[1] Mausbach says that it was, indeed, the "Bride of CHRIST" which won for women the freedom of professional life—see his book *Altchristliche und moderne Gedanken über Frauenberufe* (Gladbach, 1906).

concrete human devotion and companionship unsatisfied. Thus, for those women who do not marry and who have no family circle, there remains only the following alternative: either one allows them that fulfilment of those natural and psychic needs which the merely professional life does not satisfy, through free love relationships (a tendency represented, for example, by those modern reformers who proclaim "the right of motherhood"), or one creates for them, along some other line, the social life, the fulfilment of maternal instincts, and the concrete human work, which they do not find in their abstract professional work. The latter is done, however, in the best and most definite manner by the Orders, with their close social life, their manifold tasks of love, and their work of personal education. At the same time, through their rules, their self-elected authority, and their religious self-discipline, these institutions best meet the great difficulties which follow upon the lasting communal life of women, when the individuals are without higher order and the calming influence of a dedicated life. And finally, it is these institutions alone, which, by virtue of the solemn dignity which they assign to the virgin state, overcome the customary disparagement of the "old maid." This disparagement rests upon the idea that the one decisive question in a woman's life is whether or not she finds favour in the eyes of a man. Frau Gnauck-Kühne regards this view as the foundation of all feminine inferiority and lack of freedom, and observes with justice:

"There can be no question of a choice between two courses, unless the condition of virginity offers

the possibility of a life fully as happy and fully as valuable as that of the married woman. This choice is given by the Women's Orders, which, in the shape of a celibate life dedicated to GOD, provide an earthly existence which in happiness and value yields nothing to the married state . . . There are two paths open to a woman: the path without a man and the path with a man. Of these two possibilities, the nuns are an example of the first, of the life without the man. Upon the summit of the other path, the life with the man, stands the happy mother . . . From both these summits, and with an understanding for spiritual necessity, the right way must be sought by which to approach the solitary women in the world, the brave women workers of all classes. The matrons will have no difficulty in getting into touch with such women workers. The convents can become centres for whole classes of women workers, places of refuge, which release their charges in the morning and receive them again in the evening; they can be developed as institutions for mutual assistance and social work." [1]

Frau Gnauck-Kühne is hence right when she asserts that for the *real* solution of this problem there is no alternative to the course which she suggests. This brings us round to a point of view to which we have already called attention: the development of our civilisation is leading us to perceive, with more and more clearness, that the bases upon which

[1] The American Social Settlements, more especially the Hull House Settlement in Chicago, form a new step in this direction. At the same time the initiated know how, in such places, as the result of *contact with the real problems of life*, one realises the value of such an order and inspiration as is found in the religious communities.

our modern society has built its moral and spiritual structure are absolutely inadequate. Many deep needs, serious temptations, and severe conflicts have been entirely neglected. In every direction forces have been liberated and needs have been exposed or created—but there has been no corresponding provision of spiritual education, care, and leadership. The modern moralists, who wax so indignant over the "new ethic," should be mindful of the fact that it is very easy, on paper, to call whole classes of people to self-denial, but that one cannot reckon upon obedience and any enduring joy in life, if at the same time one deprives such people of their faith in another world with its illuminating reminder of man's higher destiny, *and if at the same time one provides no spiritual equivalent for the painful vacuity which the non-fulfilment of natural instincts always leaves in the minds and hearts of the majority of women.* When a higher view of life is lacking, it must always seem a cruel accident that a particular individual should be deprived of the satisfaction of marriage—and this individual is expected, merely for the sake of "ethics," to bow to this accident for a lifetime, while at the same time all the voluble culture of our age and all the ideals of everyday citizenship are unable to offer him or her anything which really satisfies the heart in the place of what has been missed. The authoress of the book to which we refer is undoubtedly right when she says that the increasing concentration of the modern world upon sensuous satisfaction, the more and more insistent cry of *carpe diem*, is no more than the necessary consequence of wide circles of people

having abandoned all deep religious care of the soul and spiritual fulfilment of life.

It is indeed time to consider the great problems of our civilisation more from this standpoint, instead of merely condemning, from the moral point of view, the whole modern revolt and desire for an enhancement of life. Who knows if among those in revolt we may not find the more gifted and deeper characters, who have been prevented from rising above their merely natural desires, in the first place on account of the frequently weak and uninspiring character of our modern Christianity and social morality? Under the influence of a greater inspiration these would perhaps be the very people to respond most eagerly to a higher view of life.

When the rejection of the ascetic principle has proceeded yet further, men will be forced to realise that in an atmosphere of indulgence even the simplest and most indispensable acts of self-mastery will give way to the tyranny of the desires. For even the most elementary act of self-mastery presupposes a certain acceptance and social recognition of the principle of abnegation. "Can you conceive of a moral action," Richard Wagner once asked, "otherwise than under the conception of abnegation?" Truthfulness, loyalty, honour—all these elements of character demand an overcoming of self. They therefore need a view of life which emphasizes the spiritual power of man over mere impulses and desire, a view in which this spiritual element is cultivated and practised as the foundation of all moral reliability. In order to realise this, one should

consider the intelligent hatred with which the more consistent anti-moralists regard the ascetic principle and look upon all our moral views as the consequences of this principle. In this sense, Nietzsche describes the insistence upon truthfulness as an ascetic principle, which cannot justify itself from the point of view of mere life expansion. Who cannot perceive, that, from this point of view, all earnest sense of honour undoubtedly bears within itself an element of self-overcoming, and who could be so blind, in the face of all such consequences, as not to perceive whence the rejection of the ascetic principle would ultimately lead?

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All the points of view which we have above justified are also applicable to the objections raised against *ecclesiastical celibacy*, as if it were a sort of treachery to the race and an entirely antiquated and fruitless form of asceticism. To begin with, it seems to be quite forgotten that a class of persons who are not married owing to natural causes will always exist. Hence it is of great importance, in the interests of the happiness and vital energy of the unmarried, that their condition shall not be regarded as one of necessity, and as a frustrated form of existence, but as a hallowed state full of its own special advantages and blessings. This service is rendered by the voluntarily celibate life, dedicated to GOD, with all the glory of its heroic renunciation. By this means the state of the unmarried gains an altogether new dignity and meaning. The final trend of all arguments against celibacy dedicated to the service of religion, is towards strengthening the view quite

sufficiently strengthened by nature—that the real meaning of life lies in the fact of marriage, and that the unmarried are an inferior class. It can be cloaked with fine words, but it is nevertheless the logical outcome of this attitude towards life. But it should never be forgotten that family life itself degenerates, unless it is kept in subjection to higher aims. Now celibacy is an extremely valuable means of representing the independence of higher aims in life against the ascendancy of family impulses and family cares, thus safeguarding marriage against being degraded from a sacrament to a mere matter of gratification.

Moreover, the argument already propounded in favour of asceticism, by the side of worldly callings and situations, is also applicable to this question. The oath of voluntary celibacy, so far from degrading marriage, is a support to the holiness of the marital bond, since it gives material shape to the spiritual freedom of man in the face of natural impulses; it also acts like a conscience, in respect of all passing moods and encroachments of the sensual temperament. Celibacy is a protection of marriage in this sense, too, that its existence prevents married people, in their relations to one another, from feeling themselves as the mere slaves of obscure natural forces, and leads them to take their stand against nature as free beings able to command.[1] Those who mock at celibacy as unnatural and impossible, know not, in very truth, what they do. They do not see that

[1] Anyone wishing to convince himself completely how necessary this is, need only inform himself through experienced medical men and women, what misery is caused in so-called happy marriages by a slavish yielding to impulse on the part of the man.

the attitude which induces them to speak thus must lead, as its logical consequence, to prostitution and to the dissolution of monogamy. For, if the compulsion of nature be so urgent, how can one demand continence before marriage? In fact, how can one demand a chaste life from the unmarried? And finally, do they not give a thought to the number of marriages which are for months, or years, or even for life, tantamount to celibacy for one of the partners, because the husband or wife has fallen a victim to illness? For this reason alone, consistent monogamy stands or falls with the esteem in which celibacy is held. It is no accident that Luther, by his fight against celibacy, was led to the secondary result that breach of marriage is permissible in cases where the physiological aim of the marriage cannot be fulfilled. He says, for instance:

"If a healthy woman has an impotent husband, she is to say to him: See, dear husband, thou canst not take my virginity from me, and thou hast cheated me out of my young life, wherefore thine honour and hope of felicity are endangered, and there is no marriage between us in the sight of GOD. Grant that I may have a secret marriage with thy brother or nearest kinsman and thou shalt have the name, so that thy goods may not be inherited by strangers; and allow thyself to be willingly deceived in thy turn by me, as thou hast deceived me."

This position (taken up, consistently enough, by the Reformer personally) has checked further influence by the power of the deeper Christian tradition in this sphere. To-day Luther's strongly naturalistic view of these things revives again, and in modern writers it

develops similar consequences. Forel, Ellen Key, and others, attack absolute monogamy for the same reasons which have been urged against celibacy; from which circumstance one only too clearly recognises that celibacy is not a merely hierarchical institution, as has been assumed, but is at the same time an institution in favour of family life, a heroic taking of the offensive against the confident power of merely natural impulses—which make more and more demands the more concessions one makes to them, and whose despotism can be broken only by renunciation on the great scale.

Justly do the Protestants point to the great blessings which have issued from the evangelical manse; but they forget that truly Christian family life existed *before* Luther and exists still in both confessions, so that the married pastor is not unconditionally necessary for this side of Christian culture. And they also forget that the Protestant manse itself, like the whole family of Christians, is still unconsciously nourished by the spiritual greatness of the institution of celibacy, of the mighty advance against the dominion of the senses which it represents. Marital fidelity is not in the least "natural," it is already an extraordinary conquest of Nature. Psychologically it is inextricably bound up with the demand that the spiritual man shall be stronger than his impulses and shall not be their obedient servant. Celibacy was the great sacrifice whose flame ever nourishes and irradiates this faith anew. And, in truth, how is one seriously to justify fidelity, if natural impulses are so unconquerable that celibacy

must be pronounced to be folly and a sin against nature ?[1]

I have expressly drawn attention to the deeper consequences of the contempt of celibacy, because we have to deal in this book with the fundamental bases of all our pedagogic operations. In this connection I should not omit to point out that Schopenhauer characterised the rejection of celibacy as a fatal error on the part of Protestantism. Bähr, in his *Gesprächen mit Schopenhauer*, reports that the latter said ;—

" Protestantism killed one of the vital nerves of Christianity in combating the value of celibacy, which in the Catholic Church still finds its visible expression in the monasteries and nunneries. That Luther had by then entered into the state of matrimony, that he maintained the impossibility of a chaste life outside matrimony, is held to have decided the matter. ' Wait !—that which thou hast said, that shall break thy neck.' Continuing the conversation in a gentler tone, he admitted that Luther was a great man, a deep and powerful thinker, but that he was driven by the conditions of the times into too wide-reaching admissions."

These are very serious objections, but it is indeed the duty of our age to examine them and see if they are justified. It is an indisputable fact that Protestantism, with its objection on principle to the ascetic

[1] This has been very emphatically expressed by Hilty on the occasion of the Congress on Morality at Cologne, when he pointed out that the argument urged against celibacy—that it was impossible to live a moral life outside the bonds of matrimony—directly justifies prostitution. For it does not lie in the option of everybody to enter upon matrimony at the time when the impulses are strongest.

ideal of life, occupies an entirely isolated position amidst all the great religions, including those of the Ancient World. This should indeed give us pause. And the matter is not by any means settled by drawing attention to the unnatural character of asceticism, or by reference to the abuses and exaggerations which naturally accompany such a great and difficult attempt to elevate man above himself. Protestantism should rather ask itself if, as a result of this position, it does not lend assistance to a species of naturalism which may some day prove disastrous to itself. When one bears in mind the remarkable reverence which was paid to the Vestals, and when one thinks of the saying *casta placent diis*, while remembering the almost universal rejection of the ascetic idea in Protestant literature, one is compelled to recall Schopenhauer's saying. One feels that Schopenhauer, in this elementary remark, gave expression to a sudden vision—namely, that such a position as this is absolutely incompatible with the essential foundations of a spiritual religion. In this respect Protestantism will be compelled to alter its position or to perish. The people itself *demands* a standpoint superior to the world. It pays no attention to a form of belief which leaves it too much upon the level of its natural and economic life. Precisely those very people who live and work amidst material things demand, consciously or unconsciously, an ideal of super-material freedom. As is well known, Christianity would not have become a universal religion but for its immense power of resistance to the world. For secular life pure and simple, indeed, a religion is not necessary! The turning away of the young

generation is not merely the result of religious indifference; only too often it represents the rejection of a species of faith which no longer appears to possess a genuine inward belief in the superhuman, or which at any rate produces the impression that CHRIST only lived a superhuman life in order that we might be justified in remaining on the merely human level. For this reason Nietzsche sought to attain the superhuman by another road; he missed the heroic element in Christianity because it had fallen under the dominion of the domestic Philistine.

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The rejection of every species of asceticism is, moreover, especially connected with the spirit of the great industrial community. Our economic system, with its unceasing pursuit of new opportunities for expansion, is wholly dependent upon an ever-increasing multiplication of human needs, not only in the case of the consumers, but also in the case of the workmen, who will work with greater intensity the more needs they and their womenfolk have to satisfy. W. von Siemens tells us in his *Recollections*, how, when building a great electricity works in the Caucasus, he had in the first place to solve the problem of the workers: this he did by encouraging the workmen's wives to wish for increased luxuries, jewellery, &c., in consequence of which the men were compelled to work with increased diligence. Modern industrial society regards the multiplication of material needs as the basis of its entire existence and therefore perceives in the ascetic principle its deadliest enemy, as clearly as the brewer sees his ruin threatened

by the temperance movement. In his *Asiatic Studies,* Lyall has given a vivid picture of the conflict between the Eastern ascetic view of life and modern civilisation in India; we see the incompatibility of the two points of view and the moral confusion of the younger generation of Indians which is growing up in the midst of this conflict. Japanese writers, in dealing with the fitness of the Asiatic races for modern industrial competition, have also drawn frequent attention to the fact that the whole view of life prevailing in the East is, so to speak, "anti-economical," and stands in diametrical opposition to that principle of industrial expansion which is the real motive power of the Western world[1]; it will be necessary, therefore, for the East, if it is to enter into successful competition with the West, to take over not only the *machines* but also the *philosophy* of modern civilisation.

In the opinion of a typical modern thinker such as Fr. Naumann, the ascetic ideal has passed away, never to return. He cannot see that it has any relationship to the great forces which mould life, and he regards it as a childish answer to the great economic questions of the day. In the face of the great industrial tasks of modern life, of what use to us is the ideal of voluntary poverty? Do we not rather need the desire for wealth, the greatest possible exertion and expansion of material power, to enlarge the bounds of human life? From this standpoint are we not compelled to regard the

[1] See Prof. Yoshida's speech at the "Congrès internationel d'expansion économique mondiale" (Mons, 1905).

simplification of life as a weakening of economic energy?

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The Bible tells us we are to make the world subject to ourselves; but it also says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of GOD, and all these things shall be added unto you." There is a full realisation of the fact that matter is only really organised by means of spirit. From this point of view even an apparently remote and other-worldly inward deepening of life provides, at the same time, an increment of energy for secular civilisation, and the most consistent liberation from the world is at the same time an increase in power over the world. Thus in the face of the modern type of civilisation we may well ask: Is economic progress really bound up with this blind and feverish multiplication of needs, or is not man's material civilisation itself dependent, perhaps, for its inner health, upon a strong counteracting factor in the shape of ascetic ideals? This is a question of decisive importance, in answering which the Western world may have occasion to realise anew the significance of the phrase *ex oriente lux*. In the midst of our apparently healthy and productive development of economical and technical energy who cannot perceive on every hand the symptoms of hidden disease? Consider, for example, the increasing brutality with which we pursue an aimless and meaningless struggle for life, the disintegration of will-power through the ever-increasing multiplication of the demands upon it, the disturbance of nervous equilibrium as a result of the creation of

artificial needs, and the stimulus of more and more urgent claims, the deadening of spiritual power caused by the breathless pace of our machine-like system of life, in which all the inner needs of man are reckoned as no more than sand in the bearings! One day we shall come to ourselves and ask: What is the object of all this perpetual strain, all this restless activity; what is the ultimate aim of this soul-destroying haste and competition? Is it so important that men should travel more and more rapidly from St. Petersburg to Paris, or that one nation should outdo another in the manufacture of the best motor-cars? All deeper life, all sacred peace and solemnity, all humanity's higher goods, all quiet love, are sacrificed to the insatiable demands of our ever-increasing material needs. Every section of society is compelled to join in this acceleration of life and this restless multiplication of needs. Is it absolutely indispensable that the cultivation of the earth and the technical mastery of nature should be accompanied by this destruction of the deeper life of humanity?

There can be no doubt that, either through its own downfall or through a timely regeneration, the civilised world will be compelled to abandon its present belief that the immeasurable increase of personal needs is the proper basis of its economic activity. An age will come when social thought will be deepened and purified, and when, even outside the Catholic Church, St. Francis of Assisi will raise up new disciples under new conditions. There can be no real love without great sacrifice, no true communal life without great abnegation,

no renovation of society without a heroic struggle against selfishness. The creation of artificial necessities for personal life, is, however, an incentive to the growth of selfishness ; while our slavish dependence upon a recognised "standard of life" is the deepest cause of the bitter obstinacy of the opposing parties in our economic conflicts. The humanisation of the economic struggle cannot come about except through the adoption of new values resulting from the ascent of new and higher ideals of life. On the other hand, the increase of the purely materialistic view of life, with its concentration upon outward things, will drive the struggle to a bitterness and intensity of which we can to-day form no conception.

Would it not be possible for the initiative of the individual and the total economic energy of humanity to accomplish much higher achievements, if we could succeed in freeing ourselves from the tyranny of a morbid individualism and in placing ourselves under the inspiration of great ideals and institutions in the service of justice and Christian charity, while at the same time not depriving natural human individualism of all its scope ?

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To-day all this sounds Utopian. It will appear less so when our civilisation has proceeded a few more decades along its present line. It will be perceived that no merely socialistic machinery will be capable of controlling its impulse. Along this path there will be developed a corporative brutality and selfishness which will show only too clearly what socialisation of the means of production signifies,

when it is carried on by mere communities or political majorities, and not supported by superior ideals.

There will be no escape from this, except through the spirit, and there will be none without the aid of religion; for the latter has most clearly and purely embodied and exhibited the spiritual and has best shewn us the significance of spiritual freedom. We feel inclined to remark at this point that St. Francis of Assisi has still much to say to our civilisation. This is not meant in the sense that our industrial economics should take the form of an Italian idyll; on the contrary, there must be a full recognition of all the great accomplishments of modern technical science. But our economic life must in a great measure be subordinated to the development of the soul. In this manner alone our technical and economic activity will receive a counteracting force in face of the immense temptations which result from the ever-increasing power of man over the gifts and forces of the external world. Therefore the principle of asceticism, as an educational method and as a way of life on the part of individual gifted natures, does not stand in opposition to economic development, but is rather the condition of its health. When there is no such active opposition to the tyrannical power of material interests, then economic development falls entirely into the hands of an ever-increasing desire for pleasure and a more and more unprincipled selfishness—and in this case there must come a catastrophe in comparison with which all the previous crises through which our civilisation has passed will seem almost insignificant.

We should, at any rate, bear in mind that the passionate antipathy of the modern man to the ascetic principle is connected with the *laisser faire, laisser aller,* and other characteristic tendencies of our great industrial system of competition. The personal deepening of the social idea will doubtless also contribute towards the counteraction of the reckless and unscrupulous multiplication of needs and luxuries, towards awakening an understanding of the education for inner freedom, and towards destroying that false and misleading doctrine of freedom which encourages all our inclinations to run riot, while allowing our higher nature to pass into decay.

Auguste Comte, the founder of sociology and the first really consistent social philosopher of the nineteenth century, was also the first modern thinker who again assigned to asceticism its full rights. This he did in the name of social education. It was his regular custom to eat a piece of dry bread instead of dessert, in order that he might not fail to recollect those who had not even bread. We may take this as a symbol of the imperishable social value of the ascetic principle. It may serve to remind us that the limitless satisfaction of our personal needs and passions brings us into unavoidable conflict with all really deep social life, and that we do not become free to think of others, unless we are thoroughly practised in our own emancipation from our own moods and instincts. Only the really free man is capable of true social conduct. Of freedom, however, we may say that it can be attained only by those "who must conquer it daily."

CHAPTER X

RELIGION AND SEX

THE undying importance of the moral and spiritual life-work of the saints, and the permanent necessity for the ascetic life (orders and celibacy) side by side with the ordinary activities of the world, and side by side with family life—all this is a portion of the profound spiritual influence which religion has exercised over the whole sphere of our sexual instincts, an influence based upon a ripe knowledge of human nature. This protective and restraining function of religious culture still continues to be operative, more or less, through all sections of society. The more society withdraws itself from this influence, the more we shall again learn what undisciplined sexuality really is, and the more the men and women of to-day will be brought back to an understanding of these ideals and institutions. This will be very valuable for Christians themselves, as well as for "moderns," for the former are only too apt merely to acquiesce in these things without appreciating their true significance. This applies not only to the practice of asceticism but to the Christian view of life as a whole, of which asceticism is only an expression and an educational method. The obvious need for discipline and principle which is revealed in the sexual life of to-day has led many back to the

problems of character-training; the same cause will lead them further—namely, to the great pedagogy of "cerebral energy," as it is seen developed in religious life. It will be made clear that religion alone really understands and fully takes into account the living force of our sexual nature, that it alone—though not saying much about sex matters—contains within itself the truest "psychology of sex."

The almost miraculous regenerative power with which Christianity can repair the errors of human weakness is illustrated with peculiar clearness by the effect of Christian faith upon sexual degeneration: leaving outward symptoms on one side, it touches primary central causes; it aims, not at counteracting the symptoms of degeneration, but at building up a new centre to the whole personality. It is just this depth and simplicity which is absent from the reforming efforts of those who do not base their suggestions upon genuine Christianity. How did Christianity succeed in saving the people of the decadent Roman civilisation from their appalling condition of degradation with regard to sexual matters? How did it preserve the new races who came into contact with this state of affairs from being corrupted by it? In what manner are we to explain the regenerative power (shown even physiologically) of religion?

The answer is to be found in the following facts: *religion overcomes the danger of a one-sided domination of the individual by the intellect,* thus making it possible for the unconscious element in personality again to assume its proper place; it makes it *psychologically possible* for men to free themselves from egotism; and

it serves the general purpose of distracting the soul from a too close consciousness of the animal functions—which is a much better way of preserving these functions from any kind of degeneration than the most elaborate hygienic information. The misuse of the sexual functions in the pursuit of merely individual pleasure, the whole self-conscious cult of the erotic which is a feature of modern life, the continual talking about "love" without meaning anything more, at the best, than a refined form of self-indulgence—all these things are closely connected with the wretched poverty-stricken materialism of the whole modern view of life, with the all-destroying intellectualism of our education, and with the widespread breaking down of those great religious ideas which are alone capable of lifting man outside himself and his merely animal being.

True religious faith is of decisive importance in the sphere of our sexual life. Its special function is to keep intact the creative, generative force in human nature, the unconscious life, and give it a leading place, as compared with the element of egotistical calculation. The influence of our intellectualistic culture upon sexual life is towards emphasizing the self-conscious element and stimulating reflection. This tends to the production of every kind of hypochondria. The erotic instincts, which should by right serve an evolutionary purpose beyond the subjective pleasure of the individual, become fundamentally corrupted and degenerate into degrading sensuality. The religion of the Cross has kept alive—within the region of sex as elsewhere—the spirit of sacrifice, the capacity for self-devotion ;

in opposition to the lust for pleasure, it has protected, enriched, and strengthened all those social and altruistic emotions which are so closely bound up with our sex nature. On the other hand, one-sided rationalism, according to its very nature, must reject sacrifice as it must reject the future life. Even if it theoretically favours the idea of sacrifice, it will never develop the inner strength essential to the life of sacrifice, because the circle of ideas which rationalism fosters is not of such a nature as to lead in this direction.

In his great work, *Social Evolution*, Benjamin Kidd points out that it is the function of religion to make possible to men, sacrifices, which in the face of cool reason alone, would not be made when it actually came to the point.[1] It is precisely in the sphere of sex and of sexual hygiene that this function of religion is of such paramount importance. Hence in the immediate region of sex itself, too, institutions and ideals that inspire and exercise the spirit of sacrifice are indispensable aids to keeping our sex nature in a truly healthy condition. When individual egotism, with its moods and cravings, is dominant, the way is open which leads to every sort of physiological morbidity and deterioration.

This should be noted by those "moderns" who are wont to talk of "healthy animalism," and those who take up the cult of the nude. They are travelling along a road which leads to the ruin of all healthy life-instincts, the highway to decadence.

[1] Kidd says, for example: "All religion is essentially ultra-rational. No form of belief is capable of functioning as a religion in the evolution of society which does not provide sanction for conduct, beyond, and superior to, reason."

PART II

EDUCATION AND SEX

1. INTRODUCTORY

Up to this point, I have been occupied with the general ethical position and its foundations. The establishment of such a position is of the utmost importance in approaching the problem of the education of the young in matters relating to sex. The ethical section of this little book therefore precedes the educational.

Before taking up the actual problem itself, I should like to utter an emphatic warning against over-valuation of all mere *information* and *instruction* relating to sex. It is thoroughly characteristic of our intellectualistic age that the movement towards the sexual education of the young should aim for the most part at mere explanation. The popular opinion is, no doubt, that the sexual over-sensitiveness and aberration of the youth of to-day is caused by the lack of proper instruction. It is my belief that this is a serious error. The real danger lies in the regrettable neglect of character-training and in the prevailing pleasure-seeking atmosphere of to-day. What can mere instruction do for us? If our young people are not being educated to a great view of life as a whole, instruction can do no more than stimulate curiosity. The enthusiastic advocates of mere instruction should remember the words which Ovid put into the mouth of Medea:

Video meliora proboque—deteriora sequor . . . "I see the higher and respond to it and yet it draws me downwards." Mere instruction is no safeguard unless the power of the lower impulses is counteracted by a general and systematic training of the character, and, above all else, by a thorough development of will-power. To strengthen the will against temptation is a thousand times more important than to enlighten the intellect. Of what avail will be the most accurate knowledge relating to sex and health if the individual does not possess the *power* to act according to his knowledge in the hour of trial? *The protection of youth from the dangers of sex is a question of power rather than of knowledge.*

It is said, and no doubt correctly, that scientific instruction is better than impure knowledge gathered from low sources. We forget, however, that the mere animal sex instinct is itself a lower force, tending to interest itself, even where there has been the best instruction, in what most stimulates and excites it. Therefore, to impart information will be merely to increase sexual excitability, if there be no power behind capable of disciplining the animal nature. Education in the laws of sex must be in the first place education in the laws of will.

I do not say there should be no instruction. But it is my conviction that direct sexual education is of secondary importance, whereas many modern educators would assign it the first place.

The phrase sexual education, or education in the laws of sex, carries with it the dangerous suggestion that as soon as we come into the sphere of sex some special method becomes necessary. In reality, how-

ever, the best method is simply to distract the attention. The best possible sexual education is that which says merely what is absolutely essential with regard to sex and concentrates itself upon the strengthening of all those habits and elements of character which will naturally prepare young people to take up a right attitude towards the awakening impulses. The educator in matters relating to sex should not be a specialist ; he should be as universal as possible in his outlook, and should be capable of developing an educational system every portion of which is adapted to so deepening and strengthening the whole character as to protect it against the temptations of sex. It is therefore my most profound conviction that the best education in sex is a *thorough all-round education in the deepest sense of the term*. The behaviour of any young person in the sphere of sex is the resultant of his or her education as a whole ; has the latter been merely intellectual, or has it been soft or superficial, then the boy or girl, in spite of the best possible instruction, will fall a victim to the first temptation ; on the other hand, has the whole education been such as to strengthen the spiritual and moral nature against what is sensual and lowering, then he or she will know what is impure, even in the absence of any sexual instruction, just as Parsifal, on first coming into contact with Kundry, saw in a flash the whole of what lay behind her enticements. The sexual behaviour of a given individual is a very good touchstone by which to judge of his whole education, for it enables us to perceive whether or not his training has been based upon a true knowledge of human nature and a

disciplining of its weaknesses. Considered from this point of view, the sexual laxity of the young people of to-day throws a very dark light upon the character of our education. The higher energies of youth have been so exclusively devoted to the accumulation of knowledge that no strength remains for self-discipline. Yet of what value is all our intellectual training if it produces moral weaklings? The higher types of schools, in particular, the most elevated rounds of the educational ladder, are by common experience, only too often nurseries of vice and sexual demoralisation.

When we consider the condition of our modern youth with regard to sexual morality, what are we to think of the character-training they have received? We are driven to the conclusion that our whole educational system must be lacking in sufficiently powerful educational methods. Considerations of humanity have rightly driven the old-fashioned brutal discipline out of the field. But it has not yet been replaced by truer and more psychological methods. A training in self-discipline has not taken the place of the old external discipline. During the last few decades the sublime "Thou shalt" of religion, with all its compelling appeal to the deepest springs of inner freedom, has disappeared from the lives of thousands of families. No one has set anything new in its place. The growing sexual discontent of our age has, at any rate, one good side. It exposes, with merciless and striking clarity, the disastrous weakness of the whole spirit of modern education, and thus paves the way for a reform.

2. THE EDUCATION OF THE WILL

The foundation of any such reform must be the education of the will. The French educator, Payot, in his book, *l'Education de la Volonté*, remarks with justice that prior to the eighteenth century it was customary to remind people of their *duties*, and in this way continual appeals were made to the will, which thus tended to become developed and strengthened. In more modern times, however, it became the fashion to speak only of *rights* and of so-called autonomy. Humanity thus entered upon an age of general relaxation, weakness of will, and lack of central purpose. The much-lauded modern autonomy has so far resulted in giving us the *autos* but not the *nomos*, the self but not the government! The modern world has seen an extraordinary weakening of moral backbone, a remarkable diminution in the ability to resist outward distractions; in the words of Fénelon, man has become like a candle burning in a draught. This modern weakness of will is doubtless largely to blame for the disastrous instability of the new generation when confronted with the problems of sex. Many fine words have been invented for the purpose of covering over this weakness; those who are unable to deny themselves a single wish are only too glad to discover such a high-sounding phrase as the "right of self-development" or the "affirmation of life." On the other hand, there is a great unwillingness to face the fact that really great and superabundant life-energy has invariably chosen manly

self-discipline as the symbol and expression of its concentrated force.

The French educator whom we have just mentioned has rightly reminded the men and women of to-day that the art of self-government must again come into use, and there are plenty who will agree with him. It is, unfortunately, the custom at the present time to regard the task of self-conquest—the foundation of all true human freedom—as being much easier and simpler than it really is; the need for severe practice is not adequately realised—yet this is the only way. It is a hopeful sign that at the present day a large number of nerve doctors and curative pedagogues are coming to appreciate this ancient truth, which has been insisted upon by the Church from the earliest times. For example, Dr. Levy of Nancy says: "Learn to will! Willing can and must be learnt"; while Dr. Dubois of Berne recommends the stern methods of the Stoic philosophy for the purpose of bringing weak-willed people back to a proper control over their nerves and emotions.

I maintain that what the Greek educators called "asceticism" (a discipline which was fully developed in the character-training methods of the ancient Church) is an absolutely indispensable means for the attainment of moral freedom, more especially in the sphere of sex. In every direction we see the value of consistent training, in intellectual culture, in music, in physical development: in the case of will-power alone all is left to chance. John Stuart Mill, who certainly cannot be charged with any prejudice in favour of ecclesiasticism, has very justly observed

that those who have never been accustomed to deny themselves permissible indulgences cannot be relied upon to abstain from gratifying their non-permissible desires; he also expressed his belief that a day was coming when children and young people would be systematically trained in asceticism and taught, as they were in antiquity, to overcome their desires, to brave dangers and willingly to endure pain—and all this as mere educational practice.

To take the offensive is the best defence—that is the simple principle which underlies the art of self-discipline. He who passively awaits the temptations coming from his own lower nature is sure to fall. The sensuous nature should, from the very beginning, be severely disciplined and trained to obedience. To encourage the voluntary practice of self-conquest before the age of puberty is the most practical and thoroughgoing form of sexual education.

If a boy be taught, for example, to deny himself things that he likes to eat and drink, it will be a training in moral independence. It is very easy to arouse the enthusiasm of young people for such little acts of heroism. Let a teacher try, say on a school walk, to put a little will-gymnastics into practice, by encouraging the boys to resist thirst, tiredness, &c. He will be astonished at the interest which such acts of self-conquest will arouse. The failure of much educational work is caused very largely by the merely external character of the methods employed: the teacher should aim at allying himself with the higher self of his pupil. Children are growing creatures, and instinctively resist all mere repression. Self-control should

therefore be represented as an act of *growth*, of strength, of freedom; it must be made evident that the apparent repression is only a step towards a higher life and a more concentrated energy. Through the conflict of the higher self with the bodily desires, a man's higher self attains freedom—otherwise it remains captive. These little suggestions are merely first steps. The teacher must proceed to what we may describe as the "science of self-control"; he must show how will-power is built up by a gradual process of practice on the smallest things, and how every act of self-conquest in one sphere of life makes the battle easier in all the other spheres.

There are plenty of modern mothers who are aware of the necessity for instruction in matters relating to sex, and who are perhaps anxiously awaiting the suitable moment: it is a great deal more important, however, that they should make their children acquainted with what Sailer called "the strategy of the Holy War," that they should train them every now and then to deny themselves some favourite article of food,[1] or to accomplish some heroic conquest of indolence, or to practise themselves in ignoring pain.

A prime result of such practical discipline is to create a kind of physical and nervous tradition of the supremacy of the spirit over the body and its weaknesses. It may not be out of place at this point to give one or two hints with reference to the pedagogical treatment of self-abuse. Many

[1] Joseph de Maistre once said: "Everything that hinders a man strengthens him. Many a man of thirty years of age is capable of successfully resisting the allurements of a beautiful woman, because at the age of five or six he was taught voluntarily to give up a toy or sweet!"

young people are apt to be depressed by a continual breaking down of self-control, and by the failure of their oft-renewed good intentions. Frequently these unfortunate results occur because they do not understand the psychology of will-power. It is all a question of indirect control. The exercises of will should begin first in other spheres. The will-power thus receives an all-round strengthening, and self-confidence is gained. It will then be found possible to gain the victory over long established habits. Such exercises as the following will be useful: keeping things tidy, refraining from talking, bodily gymnastics, getting up early in the morning, fasting, doing disagreeable things, carefully speaking the truth, performing drudgery (such as energetically working at a new language) with exactitude. Thus a regeneration of will-power becomes possible such as can hardly ever be achieved by direct effort in the direction of the greatest weakness, because here the tradition of failure has already become too powerful.

The outstanding feature of sexual education should not be an explanation of the sex functions, but an introduction to the inexhaustible power of the human spirit and its capacity for dominating the animal nature and controlling its demands.

When young people have learnt to appreciate the joy of such spiritual mastery, they have attained the highest possible immunity from sexual temptations. I have often found pleasure in telling boys entering their teens the story of Achilles—how his mother brought him up among girls, dressed as a girl, so that he might not have to go to Troy with the other Greek youths; but Ulysses had the

war trumpet blown before the palace gates, when the maidens all fled terrified at the noise, while the young Achilles immediately felt for his sword. In the same manner, a boy of character will not show himself a coward when the animal impulses first make themselves felt, but will at once take to arms and realise that an opportunity has been given him to prove and perfect his courage.[1]

Young people are practically never deaf to such an appeal. They are more than ready to receive Nietzsche's words: "Do not cast aside the heroic in thy soul!"

In addition, I should like to say that this species of will-gymnastics seems to me to be quite as essential in the education of girls as in that of boys, and for the special reason that in the woman's case it is necessary to work against the tendency towards a life of one-sided emotionalism. It is only by a training of the will that a real education of the emotional life can be accomplished. Regular practice in the controlling of bodily conditions and outward distractions prepares the way for a mastery of the emotions and for their noblest development; it enables them to become independent of external circumstances, of whims and moods, and to acquire concentration, force, and endurance. Such will-training protects a woman from the dangers which arise from her impulsiveness and suggestibility.

[1] By way of illustration one may also recall the well-known words of Philip of Macedon to his son Alexander when he had tamed the wild horse Bucephalus: "My son, seek thou another kingdom, for Macedon is not large enough for thee!" He who has mastered the sex impulses in youth is fit to enter into any sphere of manly activity; he has passed his examination in the most difficult exercise of will-power.

3. A CRITICISM OF THE THEORY OF "SELF-REALISATION."

In our own age, more particularly, it is extremely difficult to train young people in earnest self-discipline. The modern world is dominated by an excessively superficial conception of personality and of self-development, due largely to the influence of Nietzsche and other modern prophets of the theory of "living one's life out."

A superficial view of personality comes continually to the front, for example, in the writings of such a typical "modern" as Ellen Key. She utterly fails to distinguish between mere natural *individuality* and true *personality*. The latter cannot be attained without a struggle against the natural man and all his whims and passions. We must never forget the words of Christ: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

Goethe spoke with no uncertain voice in favour of the old-fashioned view, and well understood that the motto which should govern all real training in personality is not "live your life out," but *stirb und werde* (die and be reborn). My own method in speaking with young people would not be to moralise against this modern tendency; I should simply ask: "What part of yourself are you going to realise—your best self, the centre of your spiritual force, or the lowest and most sensual part of your

nature? What do you really understand by this doctrine of self-realisation and self-development? Do you know that control, concentration, and self-conquest is the true hygiene of vital force? When a gardener cuts away the green shoots springing from the roots of a rose bush, he does not do this in order to kill the rose, but with the express intention of concentrating and intensifying the life of the bush so that it may bloom the better. This is precisely the task of a true method of self-control. It cuts short mere sensual extravagances, so that the higher personality, the fruit of all unity and concentration, may be perfected. I should like to remind those who make a mockery of self-discipline, and talk about the evils of repression, that *they* are the great repressors, because they repress the human will by weakly allowing it to yield to temporary passion and passing desire! They it is who are the real enemies of freedom and personality, because they allow the world of outward distractions to enslave the true inner self.

4. SELF-DISCIPLINE AND HEALTH

The above point of view should be explained, too, when meeting the idea that self-control is likely to be injurious to the health of young people. The extent to which physical health depends upon the mastery of the spirit over the body has not yet been fully realised. A weakness of will with regard to sexual temptations makes a man less capable of resisting any sort of physical or nervous disturbance.

Modern psychotherapy and curative pedagogy show us that the secret of all self-development and all true health lies in government by the spirit, by the *centre of personality*. These sciences aim at securing nervous and physical health by building up the will-power and stimulating the spirit to assume its proper position of control. The idea put forward by some moderns that the restraint of sex impulse is injurious to health can best be met by an assertion of the *hygienic* value of severe self-control, and of the danger to health which results from a weakening of spiritual forces. It is impossible that any form of sexual intercourse which is condemned by a man's truer self can ever really be a source of health. In reply to those few doctors who still cling to the obsolete view as to the danger of sexual continence, I would quote Comte's saying, that doctors who bear in mind only the animal side of human nature should confine their practice to animals—they should become veterinary surgeons!

In another place (p. 110) we have dwelt at length with the alleged serious effects of sexual abstinence and shown that the scientific evidence is entirely insufficient. The majority of so-called continent young people who visit doctors with complaints of a sexual nature are not really living in a continent way, but have injured themselves by some kind of abuse. Or they are continent in practice but impure in thought. Or finally, they indulge in a far too nourishing diet, do not take sufficient exercise, and stimulate their lower feelings with excess of alcohol. I have not the slightest doubt that under such circumstances continence becomes a torture. He

who practises real self-control, however, can afford to laugh at all such hypochondriacal terrors. He knows by experience, especially if he is a man of passionate feeling, that ruling over undisciplined desires brings with it an increase of will-power and a sense of inward joy. This will convince him, as nothing else could, that his method of life cannot be inimical to health.

Carlyle has drawn attention to the fact that in the Germanic languages, the words "healthy" and "holy" were originally identical. This is no coincidence. Unfortunately, however, this fundamental connection between healthiness and holiness has been lost sight of during the last century. Doctors, in particular, have forgotten that to fulfil their mission really adequately, they must be priests as well as doctors.

. . . . . .

We live in an age in which the nerve doctors more and more claim to be our guides in the conduct of life. Their point of view is, unfortunately, wholly determined by the abnormal cases with which they come into contact; their field of vision is crowded with degenerates; with supersensitive, disturbed and perverse people. They approach traditional morality and demand that its standards shall be lowered to suit their patients; nay, they would like to dose even the healthy with their diluted type of ethics, for fear lest these, too, should develop psycho-pathic symptoms! Thus the reduced capacity of neurasthenic and other abnormal men and women is made the standard of what should be demanded from the race in general—*our*

whole moral ideal is to be based upon the material found in the nerve specialist's waiting-room! This is indeed the last straw! It was Nietzsche's reproach against the old ethical ideas that they had been dictated by the needs of the weaker and less full-blooded members of the community—but what shall we say of the new ethical ideas which are derived from a consideration of abnormal and neurasthenic people? Moreover, even these people are treated from quite a false point of view. The extraordinary regenerative power of high ideals is left out of account; it is forgotten that elevating spiritual demands act as an "electro-therapeutic cure" for weak people.

This much is certain: true "sexual hygiene" is only just commencing to be understood; consistent self-control and the direction of the mind towards spiritual ideals have a much larger hygienic significance in the economy of our organism than is dreamed of to-day. The whole psycho-physical organisation of man—the governing position of the central organ at the centre of the whole nervous system, the close connection of all the organs with the cerebrum—is directed towards such a spiritual control. In the animal organism it is certain fixed instincts which connect the *sexus* with the conditions of life as a whole; but man has a spiritual centre for this work of centralisation, therefore for him nothing is so unnatural as a sacrifice of the deeper conscience to any sort of organic claims. But it is precisely this close linking-up of the lower centres with the centres of spiritual life which brings with it a great danger—namely, that the lower centres

will make use of the spiritual forces in order to enhance their own separate desires. *Er braucht's allein, um tierischer als jedes Tier zu sein!* We have continually in and around us a philosophy of sex which represents not a spiritual penetration and ordering of animal instincts, but a misuse of the spirit in the service of sexual passion. Man's slavish dependence upon sexual instinct is due to this continual magnification of sensuous claims through a thought and imagination dominated by the senses. We do not really believe that we can be free. We do not dream with what ease the spirit is capable of ruling the world of sense impulse, when it resolutely connects itself with the real sources of its power.

Have the courage to live purely, and consistently to dominate the physical nature, assigning it, from the spiritual sphere, its due rights and proper limits. Have the courage in all these questions to think truly spiritually. You will be astonished at the willingness with which nature, the work of GOD, recognises its master!

5. THE PROTECTIVE VALUE OF A SENSE OF SHAME

This will be a suitable point at which to say a few words about the sex problem in the school. The work of the school in this connection consists, it seems to me, far more in some such training of the will as I have above indicated, than in a direct explanation of the facts of sex. There is certainly

nothing to be said, however, against preparatory work on botanical and zoological lines. It is so obvious that these subjects contain much admirably suggestive matter that I need not dwell on them.

But I should like to protest emphatically against a direct explanation of the details of human sexuality before a class.[1]

Those who favour such opinions have forgotten that a sense of shame is the greatest protective force we have in the sphere of sex. Wolfram von Eschenbach described it as *das feste Schloss um alle guten Sitten* (the bulwark which protects all good customs)—and F. T. Vischer says: "Reticence is not hypocrisy; a people is doomed when it ceases to feel shame."

To-day, unfortunately, there is a very widespread view that a sense of shame is an obsolete survival of a past dark age, a thing derived from some ancient superstition as to the evil nature of the sex functions.

It is a matter for surprise that even scientific writers should be so entirely oblivious of the scientific truth that very deeply rooted instincts invariably have some fundamental biological function to discharge. The mere intellect may not always understand what these functions are, for the very

[1] The author was once asked to give a lecture on sexual dangers before the assembled pupils of a Swiss High School. He gave his lecture the title "The Gymnastics of the Will," and indicated the connection between this subject and the sphere of sex (in which is to be found the most difficult and responsible will-exercise) only in a general way. This kind of influence is far more suitable for younger children (in the school) than any more direct reference to sexual matters. This indirect method will provide exactly the sort of encouraging influence which is necessary and suitable for children of this age. In this manner we avoid the great danger of all direct teaching—namely, the undue attraction of the attention to sexual matters.

good reason that they may be intended as barriers to the intellect itself; they may serve to protect our most important vital processes from the dangers which threaten them through an excess of conscious attention.[1]

I can recollect a doctor's pamphlet in which he naïvely wonders why people do not talk just as freely about the sexual functions as about any other physical processes. The atmosphere of secrecy which surrounds the sphere of sex seems to this author and to numerous others no more than a product of what they erroneously call the "Christian doctrine of the sinfulness of the sex instinct," and without further consideration the instinct of shame is dismissed as being a mere relic of an obsolete philosophy. This example illustrates, in a striking manner, how easily the suggestive power of abstract theories and fixed modes of thought can blind people to the most elementary facts of observation. It is an extraordinary thing that a doctor should fail to see the radical difference which exists between the sex functions and any other natural processes. The sexual organs are associated with sensations of the utmost excitement and pleasure, and hence are continually threatening to absorb an undue share of imagination, anticipation, and recollection. This mental preoccupation, which is directed not so much to the reproductive utility of the sex organs, as to the pleasure which they promise the individual,

[1] A comparison with Benjamin Kidd's *Social Evolution* will prove very interesting in this connection. Kidd maintains that the invasion of the whole sphere of life by the intellect is fatal to the evolution of the race; religion, on the other hand, stands guard over the future of humanity, one of its prime functions being to keep the intellect in check.

is the greatest obstacle to a healthy development of sexual life. To prevent it must be a central object of all sexual education. When thoughts connected with sex secure a dominant position in the mental life of an individual, then there is grave danger that they may so tyrannise over the will as to render the individual unable to control his actions.

By thus resisting intellectual curiosity, a sense of shame exerts also another kind of protective influence ; it restrains people from regarding a function which should be dedicated to the service of the race as a mere means of personal enjoyment. The great educators of the past have all been instinctively aware of this truth, and have hence strongly insisted on the importance of cultivating a sense of shame ; they have realised that the chief task of sexual education is not to draw the attention to sex matters, but to distract it from them. They have understood that in making use of the intellect to restrain sex instincts there was every danger of the intellect itself, through the excessive familiarisation, being captured and employed in the service of the enemy. Their methods were therefore indirect. They believed it best to develop religious thoughts which should have the effect of raising the individual not only above sensuality but above the whole sphere of the material universe. By means of ennobling truths, examples, and symbols, they aimed at keeping the individual constantly in touch with a higher life.

On the basis of such considerations as the above, I find myself compelled to protest emphatically and on principle against every kind of direct sexual

instruction in the school, and, in fact, against any too detailed enlightenment of the young with regard to sexual matters.

It is no doubt useful to give some general information about the propagation of plants and animals, but I do not believe in a complete course of instruction full of unnecessary details, such as was proposed at the Mannheim Congress for Sexual Education. Sex specialists have lately been taking a great deal of interest in the problem of sexual education, and they are unfortunately responsible for introducing a serious error into the present day treatment of the subject—namely, the view that detailed biological and physiological knowledge is necessary for ethical and hygienic conduct. Such knowledge may well be left for private acquisition at a later age. As material for a class of young people it is unsuitable. It only tends to arouse curiosity and interest in sexual matters, and prompts further inquiry into everything that has not been revealed.

The teacher can do most good by encouraging the development of character and will-power in the most thorough and practical manner possible, and by basing all his work upon *a great view of life as a whole*. This will exert a better protective influence than all the biological information that ever was given, and will be more effective than any direct instruction.

Even in the case of boys leaving school at the end of their teens it is of no value to enter into explanations of all the different sexual diseases, as is now so often done. The boys already know

more about this subject than the teacher tells them. It would produce an infinitely better effect if the teacher were to give the boys the broadest idea he could of the great possibilities of character, if he were to encourage them to look at the whole question of sex from the point of view of character, to consider their responsibilities, and the value of restraint and self-mastery.

In the case of boys leaving school such an appeal to a higher view of life is much better than explanations going into all sorts of disgusting particulars. The argument from the danger of sexual vices is not the best, because each individual is sure to hope that through special care, chance, or other circumstance, he, at any rate, may escape. The whole matter should be raised to a higher plane of thought.

Should there be special circumstances which make a teacher feel that he or she is particularly called upon to give some instruction in sexual matters (say in order to counteract impure elements in the life of the school), then the best thing would be to speak to two or three boys or girls privately. Some simple explanation should then be given in connection with a moral and religious view of life as a whole. It can then be left to chosen pupils of the highest character to influence and enlighten the others in a friendly way, thus helping to create a wholesome corporate spirit in the school.

For use in our schools we have a large quantity of literature containing biological matter bearing upon sex; I do not know of any which deals with the suppression of obscene conversation, pictures, &c., in the middle and upper classes of

our higher schools. It is just here that such private influence as I have above indicated is most useful.

The necessity of combating this sort of thing provides an opportunity for approaching the subject of sex without going into it in the presence of a whole class. I would make a special point of the social duty. I should encourage the best pupils to realise their power for good over the others, and appeal to them to save the weaker members of the class from the dangers of impure speech, &c. At the same time the importance of purity of word and thought for personal health should be explained.

Systematic instruction for teachers in the physiology of sex (as suggested by so many doctors) hence seems to me far less necessary than systematic instruction in *character-training*. It is of supreme importance that a teacher should so understand the methods of exerting ethical influence, that from the first school year onwards he is able to make a truly educational use of every phase of school life in the interests of character-training.

Recent years have seen a remarkable diminution in the sense of shame. It no longer plays the part it once did in the education of the young. The consensus of centuries of opinion in favour of cultivating this protective factor is to-day being ignored. This is due to the disastrous belief of the modern man that all true wisdom began with him; whereas in truth it is precisely in modern times that vague and abstract ideas have taken the place of a sane and balanced understanding of the actual truths about life. Personally I have not the slightest doubt that a highly-developed sense of

shame protects young people far better than the best instruction—and better counteracts any knowledge they may obtain from impure sources. It should never be forgotten that the protection which our sexual natures most need is not protection from outward influences but from our own thoughts. Such protection can be secured only by a properly cultivated sense of shame.

We modern intellectualists are so accustomed to probe into everything with our scientific thought and our prying reflections that we are only too apt to forget that in certain of the deeper things of life too much reflection is an unwholesome and disturbing influence.

The sense of shame is a health-preserving instinct. Its function is to draw a veil of unconsciousness over the deepest mystery of life and preserve it from too anxious thought. Nietzsche has very wisely drawn our attention to the profound truth illustrated by the old legend of Eros, who, in spite of being forbidden to do so, insisted upon turning the light of his torch upon Psyche: namely, that the bright light of intellectual reflection can do terrible damage in certain regions of the inner life.

There was certainly much justification in a reaction against false prudery, a prudery itself derived from unwholesome reflection and not from deep and pure instinct. To-day, however, this reaction has shot far beyond the mark. It has been forgotten that a far more wholesome instinct lies behind the ancient modesty with regard to sex matters than can be found in the shamelessness of modern life. This modesty has stood for centuries as a barrier

between the hidden sources of life and strength and the destructive influence of reflection, and the danger of an over-excitation of sexual feeling by the imagination. By the time the sexual over-excitability and degeneration of our time has reached a further stage of development, people will perhaps have gradually learnt that it is excessively dangerous to fill the soul with images of sex processes, &c. It is as great a danger for the Eros as it is for the Psyche. People will have again to learn the true necessity and value of that protective instinct of the unconscious life which we call the sense of shame.[1]

My remarks must not, however, be misunderstood in the sense that I stand in opposition to all instruction in sexual matters for the young. I believe, however, in the greatest possible moderation and diffidence in this respect, in an avoidance of all unnecessary detail, and in the invaluable importance of a sense of shame. My attitude is determined very largely by a consideration of the danger of dwelling too exclusively on the *material* side of sexual life ; this leads to an over-valuation of the merely material and physiological aspect as compared with the ethical and religious. Our most important task is to arouse those higher thoughts and feelings the function of which it is to control, ennoble, and preserve the physical side of sexual life. I am compelled to regard it as a serious evil that so much explanatory literature, enter-

[1] If I am not mistaken, recent experience in the use of Röntgen rays has shown that their penetration may inflict terrible injury upon certain delicate bodily tissues. This is precisely analogous to the psychic effect of intellectual reflection when directed towards certain spheres of the inner life; its penetrating rays may destroy much that is absolutely essential to a well-balanced life.

ing into all kinds of unnecessary and often disgusting particulars, is to-day being widely circulated among the young. A book has recently been published specially for young girls, which I may take as a glaring example of the worst type of modern sexual pedagogical literature: incredible though it may seem, it enters into explanations of some of the worst aspects of sexual perversion, such as sadism and masochism. This is as if, in order to explain infectious diseases, children were to be inoculated with their germs! In the face of this tendency it cannot be too often and too strongly emphasized that sexual education does not consist in making children acquainted with every detail of sexual physiology and with all the perversities of degenerate sexuality, but in introducing them to the nobler aspects of moral and spiritual life, and especially to the mastery of the spirit over material things. They should be given to understand that the control of the spirit over the sexual emotions does not mean that the latter should be crushed, but that they should be inspired, enriched, and purified to play their right part in life as a whole; it signifies not an impoverishment but an enrichment of love! As Kingsley said: "If a man is to love nobly he must have lived a noble life."

By way of conclusion I may utter a word of warning against a too early explanation of sexual matters. Especially in the case of the modern child this may lead to premature development. The dangers of impure knowledge being acquired unknown to the parents are best met by a careful all-round education, by an intimate relationship between parents and children, and by the cultivation of the

sense of shame. Children brought up earnestly and with love are easily persuaded not to pay attention to any corrupting talk. The more intimate the connection between parent and child, the longer can explanations be postponed without fear of knowledge being acquired through undesirable channels.

Finally, let me quote the words of a nerve doctor who impressively protests against the dangers of this modern tendency (*Nervöse Angstzustände u. ihre Behandlung*, by Dr. W. Stelzel, a Viennese specialist in psycho-therapy: Berlin, 1906): "I am a decided opponent of the now popular policy of systematically enlightening young people with regard to the facts of sex. It seems to me to be an epidemic, a kind of unwholesome mental craving for publicity. The idea of explaining sex matters to school-classes is simply monstrous: it would inevitably lead countless children to fill their minds with such things. The scientific method is not, I believe, practicable. The problem is one for individual treatment. The best method is, that beginning at a certain age, the parents should introduce references to matters connected with sex into their conversation, as a matter of course, without leading the children to regard the subject as in any way peculiar. There should be no special ceremony, so to speak. The children should gradually acquire a knowledge of the absolutely essential facts of sex, without everything being understood too soon. We must not forget that the root of all thirst for knowledge lies in sexual curiosity, and that it would involve a great injury to the development of humanity if children were to be prematurely enlightened."

6. SEXUAL EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL

After this digression let us return to the task of the school. It has been stated that the teacher can do far more by indirect methods, by stimulation of the will, than by direct instruction. The development of the will should be the goal and inspiration of the whole work of the school, right through its discipline and curriculum. In the course of giving ethical instruction to the young, I have spoken with boys and girls of twelve on the question: "What opportunities are there in the school for employing your wills?" The children were full of suggestions and took a remarkable interest in the topic. It was a surprise and a revelation to them that it was possible to use the school to increase their strength. On such occasions I have always been quite astonished to see how totally new it was to the children to look at the task of performing disagreeable school work (for example), from the point of view of will-gymnastics. They were simply astounded to learn that precision, cleanliness, and independence with regard to a piece of work would bring with it an increase of will-power and endurance in every other sphere, and that carelessness in one thing would infect the performance of others. But the idea once being suggested they quickly became conscious of their own hitherto unnoticed observations to this effect. It is most profoundly to be regretted that in our schools the development of character has not been placed in

the centre of the whole life of the school and recognised as the true goal of education. If this were the case one could not only train the character by suitable moral-educational methods and by making use of every phase of school life, but also provide a source of inspiration for many of the more monotonous duties of school, the performance of which is at present enforced by merely outward discipline without any appeal to the inner life. From the point of view of sexual education it is particularly unfortunate that discipline is often secured by means which have a degrading effect upon the sense of honour (such as flogging and harsh language), rather than by drawing out the best forces latent in the children's characters. The best protection against the secret vices prevalent among school children, is, however, a highly developed sense of honour, such as that cultivated in American schools. The title of Schiller's essay: "The Man who was a Criminal because he had lost his Sense of Honour," has a deep educational significance: among young people, more particularly, a sense of honour is the foundation of all moral purity, and a teacher who makes light of his responsibility in this respect is not free from blame should his pupils degenerate morally.

The lack of systematic character-training in our schools is an intolerable state of affairs, for this reason, also, that a whole series of severe temptations exist in the life of a school, which, if dealt with in a truly educational manner, may certainly be of use in the development of character; but which otherwise bring about the complete deterioration of char-

acter, thus destroying the power of resistance to sexual dangers.

In the first place, there is the danger of a bad collective influence. Nietzsche once said: "Common life makes common characters." That is putting the matter bluntly; but the statement contains a germ of truth. The suggestive influence of a mass of people may be a source of serious danger to the individual whose life it dominates. In the case of a school these dangers are very real indeed. Boys follow one another like sheep, after good or evil. The power of social suggestion is peculiarly disastrous in connection with sexual matters. Real character-training can show its power more especially by making the individual independent of the mass, by strengthening the personal conscience, and by developing an earnest public opinion which educates the individual instead of deteriorating him. A few well-chosen words on the part of the teacher may here prove extremely fruitful and bring about a state of public feeling in the class, which may prove very helpful, more particularly in sexual matters. With regard to making the individual independent of the dangers of collective temptation, I may quote the old truth that the offensive is the best defensive. The teacher must speak to the young people of the conquering power of the will and teach them that no good intention or true conviction has any value if it has not the power to assert itself against any low public opinion. The "Knight of the Holy Grail" is a symbol expressing the truth that in the quest for the highest a sword and armour of steel must be borne. In other words, mere passive

innocence is of no value; everything depends upon the aggressive power of conviction. The best field for the practice of a determined will is the social life of a school.

Whoever tries to give encouragement of this kind to the young will find that they are eager to accept it and that they will quickly come to look at all the problems of school life with quite different eyes. The great opportunities which exist in this direction are not, however, utilised. This neglect is now making itself felt in a very tragical manner in the epidemics of bad sexual habits which spread in so many schools. I may here draw attention to the extremely injurious influence upon character of the school lie. When boys become used to telling lies of convenience, year in year out, no character-training is of any use. It is my own belief that the use of superficial or degrading methods for securing discipline in our schools is largely responsible for this untruthfulness. A weakness of will with regard to speaking the truth will lead to weakness and laxity of every kind. It has been very pertinently said *Omnis masturbator mendax:* I would employ this saying also in the reverse sense; every liar will also practise self-abuse. Lying carries with it a deterioration of personality and weakens the power of resistance to every form of temptation. A campaign against untruthfulness, carried out in a thoroughgoing and pedagogical manner, would awaken that sense of honour latent in the inner man, which is the best protection against every sort of physical degradation. He who loses self-respect in one sphere cannot retain it in another.

We again see, in considering this example, how absurd it is to regard sexual education as an isolated subject. The sexual weakness and degeneration of large sections of our youth is only the outward expression of a general neglect of character-training in our educational system. *All earnest character-training is already in itself sexual education.* It is a fortification against every sort of undisciplined animalism. If the ethical motive was more in the centre of school life, then when the critical years came, only a short reference to the nature of this new battle that had to be fought would be necessary, only an appeal to higher motives already often exercised. Our modern enthusiasts for "sexual education" are greatly deceiving themselves if they think it would be possible, with safety, suddenly to introduce into the modern school a quantity of information about subjects connected with some of the most dangerous passions known to human nature. The schools of to-day are so exclusively intellectual and the character-training they provide is so inadequate and superficial, that the boys and girls have not a sufficiently practised will-power, a well-enough developed consciousness of responsibility, or a pure enough sense of honour, to enable them to make a proper use of their dangerous knowledge!

So far I have dealt chiefly with the importance, in sexual education, of a proper pedagogy of the will. I should like briefly to mention one or two other natural forces and interests which are important from an educational point of view.

The highest point of pedagogical skill, in this sphere, consists not only in strengthening the

spiritual man against the animal man, but, in accordance with the principle of *divide et impera*, in distinguishing between a lower and a higher in the region of sex itself. The higher feelings bound up with the sex feeling should be made use of in the work of controlling the animal self. For example, the emotion of *chivalry* is an elementary passion in every healthy boy, and comes into being along with the primitive desires which first attract him towards the opposite sex. It should never be forgotten that sexual development is a process of expansion. The process of growth, with its egocentric desires and feelings, is supplemented by a development the object of which is to fit the organism for the service of the race, to train it to a dedication of its spare strength. This is accompanied by a tremendous increase in the power of self-sacrifice and a stimulation of altruistic tendencies, while the capacity for self-control is aroused.

The very same process which carries with it the greatest dangers which beset the path of youth, contains within itself the seeds of the most powerful safeguards against these very dangers. *The wisest educator is he who makes the best use of this fact.* His task is not, however, a simple one. The ethical stimulus will require to be continually deepened and strengthened by a religious appeal. The forces which nature arouses for the propagation of the race are not so easily held in check. The higher tendencies towards chivalry and self-denial become really dominant over the merely natural impulses only when they are purified and strengthened by being brought into relationship with the conception

of GOD, when the world of mere sexuality with its gross and sensual self-forgetfulness is surpassed by the perfect surrender of self to a higher life. Unless the whole matter is seen in the light of a higher relationship, even the most refined and purified developments of sexual feeling will be like the white foam on the surface of the wave, and will always tend to return to their elementary form ; there will be no firm hold against mere sensuality. Nevertheless the educator should always proceed *inductively*, working from below upwards ; it is supremely important that he should stimulate and make use of *natural forces*.

The chivalrous tendencies of boyhood are among the most valuable assets of the educator. In the face of some modern romances dealing with the young, it is very important to remember the fact that in the case of healthy boys the awakening sexual desires do not run in the direction of an immediate satisfaction, but tend rather to arouse feelings of chivalrous devotion. One may, indeed, say that the youthful sex instinct directs itself not so much towards the actual womanly as towards the "eternal womanly."

The object of the educator must be to employ these higher feelings which come into being with puberty to counteract brutality and degenerate tendencies. It is often simply a question of a few well-chosen words to draw out the already latent chivalry and help the boy to appreciate its value. One should talk with boys on the subject: "What is perfect chivalry?" This would be a means of enlisting on the teacher's side the youthful desire for heroic perfection and consistency. It should

be made clear that true chivalry consists more particularly in protecting a woman against the consequences of her own coquetry and thoughtlessness rather than in taking advantage of them. The chivalrous sensibilities must also be developed by an education which encourages not only girls but also boys to take part in all sorts of practical helpful work. The boys should be trained to be chivalrous to girls in outward particulars as well as in the deeper sense. At a suitable age boys will be able to appreciate the symbolical significance of politeness towards women, and this must be explained to them. What these customs should really mean for the inward attitude of men towards women can be made clear in all its consequences.

While dealing with the subject of outward habits, I may refer to the importance of bodily cleanliness in the sphere of sex. All the old religions understood the inner significance of outward habits of this kind and made them of pedagogical use. In Björnson's educational romance, *The House of Kurt,* is the description of a mother who is trying by the most careful educational methods to preserve a boy who has inherited almost unmanageable animal passions; almost in the forefront of her training stands a bodily cleanliness carried nearly to the point of fastidiousness. This is a piece of very pertinent observation.

But it must on no account be forgotten that there is a danger here which must be very carefully avoided, namely that of a vain and self-conscious bodily culture. Anything which leads to egotism opens the door to every sort of moral corruption.

7. THE HYGIENE OF THE IMAGINATION

A proper hygiene of the imagination is an exceedingly important point. It is when sexual feeling has dominated the imagination that it acquires its greatest power. In this sphere there is not much to be done by any outward control. He who cannot train youth to the self-control and self-education of the mind will never accomplish anything at all. Young people should be taught how profound is the influence that the images upon which we feed our minds exert over our whole future conduct and our stability of character in general. *Sapere aude* is the motto for a truly manly spirit—have the courage, in spite of mockery and contempt, to withhold yourself from all those modern plays, exhibitions, &c., which are products of the spirit of lust or even designed to appeal to it. In this connection I may well appeal to Schopenhauer, who has analysed the influence of sexual instinct on the imagination with extraordinary acuteness; he reveals, as few others have done, the deceitful and enticing magic of illusion. The topic of the mastery of the higher self over the befogging influence of lower illusions has always a great attraction for young people. It is only a question of finding the right words with which to arouse the sense of honour. For young people no instruction in sexual matters is of greater importance than an explanation of the illusory power of the sexual impulses.

This is the right place in which to say a word about the unpedagogical and inartistic craze for nudity, which is quite a feature of modern life and is frequently recommended as an antidote to prudery and an exaggerated sexuality. Because a half-veiled representation is apt to have an unhealthy suggestive influence, it does not exactly follow that a continual presence of the naked in art and life will have an opposite effect upon the senses. It is rather another kind of suggestion. Those who deny this are either deceiving themselves or they are thinking of those very few who are really educated in this respect. True art has never concerned itself simply with undressed people. The greatest artists have too much feeling for the tragedy which is bound up with the nude, and have therefore draped their figures, or given them divine features, or included them in some great scheme with a spiritual significance. We must not deceive ourselves into thinking that all feeling for the beauty of the human figure is purely æsthetic. A great deal of it is sexual and springs unconsciously from a system of values which has its origin in the racial instinct of sex. Frequently we do not in the least realise the extent to which our æsthetic tastes are dominated by sex-feeling.

8. THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF PHYSICAL WORK

A very valuable suggestion of Pestalozzi's still remains to be mentioned; one that is as important

for girls as for boys. Pestalozzi expressed the very true opinion that all self-control, all shame, and all calm collected strength consist essentially in doing and saying nothing except in the living presence of the conscience. This continual presence of the higher self is, however, not to be attained without the necessary practice. The best practice is, in Pestalozzi's opinion, *handwork, and particularly household work:* this provides the best opportunity for disciplining the spirit, so that it may be fully present in all actions, down to the smallest details, and for controlling and inspiring everything, thus making our lives perfectly harmonious. This is an idea of supreme educational significance.

It is certainly no accident that along with the exclusively intellectual education which falls more especially to the lot of our young men, there is found such a poor degree of ethical development. The great danger of all merely mental education is that the spirit tends to live in the abstract alone, and is not educated to control and inspire physical actions. It is my own firm opinion that it would be an immense benefit to our boys, and one that would make itself felt more particularly in the sphere of sex, if handwork were made obligatory; above everything else the home education should aim at securing the most precise and careful execution of all household work.

The Swedish educator, Palmgren, who has played such an important part in the growth of the handwork movement, even goes so far as to say that the superior ethical refinement of women is largely due to the fact that their housework has so disciplined

their mental faculties as to render the latter capable of watching over and inspiring every action. The man's mental energy has not the same chance of securing concrete expression. I may conclude by calling attention to Pestalozzi's description, in *Leonard and Gertrude*, of Arner's sexual education system: "Arner's method of counteracting every species of sexual laxity—from coquetry to child-murder—and of inculcating control of the animal passions, was to give a careful training in orderliness and thoughtfulness, *before* the sexual feelings had come into being. When the sex instinct came it found a house in perfect order and discipline, with a master capable of training the new inmate to behave in a manner corresponding to the character of the household, and able to put it in its proper place, should it show any signs of insubordination."

In these few words we have an expression of that fundamental truth of *indirect* sexual education, upon which all my own suggestions have been based, namely the idea of preventive training, of establishing the mastery of the spirit over the whole field of action. To banish all character-training discipline from our education, while believing that a little explanation of sex matters will serve to govern the untaught demons of desire, is to be guilty of the crassest shortsightedness. The sex instinct, when it comes, must find an orderly household in which it will have to take its due place.

9. RELIGION AND SEXUAL EDUCATION

The foregoing treatment of the subject from a moral and educational point of view would be incomplete if I were not to add my profoundest conviction (already frequently indicated), that in the work of sexual education, religion is the greatest force. I must now explain, as concisely as possible, why religious influence, in this connection, seems to me to be peculiarly indispensable.

In the first place, the merely moral and secular suggestions described above do not achieve a lasting effect unless they have behind them the inspiring and complementary force of a fundamental religious belief. All our efforts are lacking in deeper meaning if they are not correlated to a great spiritual view of life as a whole. Even the most perfect development of will-power tends to degenerate into a mere athletic exercise without enduring significance. The deepest religious and philosophical thought declares that this world of the senses and this earthly life are not the whole truth but only a stage of preparation for a higher and spiritual world. Without this belief our educational work deteriorates.

This consciousness of another world is also of great educational value in the following sense: if our whole being be conceived of as confined to our short earth-life, there results an immense increase in the power of all earthly temptations over the human soul—all higher appeals then seem to be merely fanciful references to a dream-world without reality

or power. Euripides has magnificently expressed this idea in the scene where Phaedra's servant soothes her mistress's pangs of conscience by dwelling on the complete indifference with which the endless world-life and its natural gods regard the scruples of mankind. Why struggle and deny oneself? In opposition to the primitive desires of nature, how weak are all the claims of morality if alone and unsupported by the power of positive religion! The illusions of the senses are better able to influence us, and can awaken within us more attractive associations than any merely intellectual and secular philosophy. Paul showed a true knowledge of life and of the human soul when he said: "If there be no resurrection of the dead, let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die!" Spinoza wrote the following well-known sentences in reply to Paul's words: "This appears to me as absurd as if someone were to stuff himself with poison or unwholesome food because he knew that his body would not endure for ever! Or I may compare it to the attitude of a man, who, believing his soul to be mortal, instead of eternal, would therefore prefer to be insane and without understanding."

Thus speaks the intellectualist and reveals his lack of insight into human nature. There are certainly a number of highly rational arguments against pleasure-seeking, selfishness, and passion, but when pitted against the elemental forces of life they are seen to be powerless—at any rate in the case of strong and passionate natures. For such the belief in a higher and eternal life is alone able to overcome the enticements of our life in the flesh.

Without faith in the spiritual world, the human spirit will, in the end, lose faith in itself. This belief, lit at the fire of CHRIST Himself, influences the human spirit and fills it with ever-increasing strength and confidence.

It has been observed that at times when the land has been devastated by epidemics, the prospect of such an uncertain tenure of life has often led the people to plunge into perfect orgies of debauchery. This is but an illustration of the general truth that a concentration of attention upon the perishing things of this earth tends to dry up moral enthusiasm and to stimulate cravings for pleasure and brute stupefaction. No merely human view of life, however beautiful its idealism may be, can adequately counteract this tendency and develop that dignified and controlled attitude towards the whole world of sense pleasure which is the gift of spiritual religion, with its Pisgah sight of eternity. The after effect of such religion is still found unconsciously present in the minds of many non-believers, and it is this which prevents them from realising the appalling depreciation of human life which is the logical consequence of their own acknowledged ideas.

The Christian religion, in particular, has another very important effect upon sex relationships. The spiritual life and historical facts of Christianity aroused humanity to a deep new inward feeling, a powerful spiritual yearning, and a boundless readiness for sacrifice. These great factors made themselves felt not only in the spiritual world, but also in the region of sex feeling, and they have here exercised a won-

derfully refining, intensifying, and elevating influence. In reply to Schiller's request :

Schenket mir Euer unsterbliches Leben,
Hebet zu Eurem Olymp mich empor !

(Give me thy imperishable life, lift me up to the heights of thy Olympus !) one may say : the Christian religion has raised the soul to heaven and placed it upon a plane higher than that of matter ; at the same time heavenly love has ennobled and educated earthly love—has given it, as it were, a share of the glory of eternal love.

It may be asked : What about the well-known theory that the religious life originates chiefly in the sexual instinct, unsatisfied or diverted from its ordinary channels ? Ground for such assertions is found in the fact that there are natures whose piety is of a certain indefinable " oily " character, about whom one feels at once an atmosphere of smug sensuality. In their case it is easy to believe that their religion is no more than an expression of sensuous feeling. But there are also people whose religion is unconsciously bound up with economic desires or socio-political passions. Misuse of this kind is rooted in the weakness of human nature, but does not prove anything against the deeper source of religion itself. He who thinks religion is derived from sex, who ranks himself with those foolish people who are always trying to explain the whole world from one point of view, does not understand that the mighty uplifting force which was behind the great religious personalities of the past—and indeed led them to deny themselves earthly love—could hardly

have itself originated in sex instinct. He who has so little capacity for contact with the spiritual world that he cannot see that here lies the independent source of religious life, had better be left to his philosophising. He is certainly not worth refuting.

Plato was right when he maintained that the influence of religious feelings and instincts upon the sphere of sex is much more important than the reverse influence: with young people the demands of sex often absorb the deepest energies of the soul; spiritual yearning and love, pity, artistic feeling, the idealistic craving for perfection, all these are sunk in the pursuit of temporary pleasure and are too frequently never recovered—more especially in the absence of great religious leaders.

There could be no better proof of the independent power of religion than the above described ennobling and deepening effect of Christianity upon earthly love. One might even say that if at times sex feeling is carried over into the realm of religion, this is caused by the very fact that our sex life has received so much from religious sources, that something is merely being given back to that sphere from which it originally came. Consider the state of affairs with regard to sex before and after the commencement of the Christian era! It is abundantly clear which was here the giver and which the receiver.

In connection with this question of the deepening of sexual love by religion there arises another important effect of spiritual belief upon the natural desires. The modern world is apt to overrate the value of ethics and philosophy, but the truth is

that these can only recommend and forbid; it remains for religion to do the more difficult and important work of *guiding the forces of human nature into new channels*, of transmuting sensual desires into a higher kind of power. This is the supreme triumph of religion in the sphere of sexual education.

Religion alone possesses the power of opening the doors to higher avenues of development for those feelings which will most likely otherwise be excited and absorbed by sexual life alone, such as imagination, devotion, and emotional desire; in fact those very feelings which tend to raise men above themselves and above the prosaic level of ordinary life. Religion opens up a realm of ideals, in which all is real that in this world is only dimly felt and desired, a realm in which the soul can perceive in full clarity and completeness, spiritual truths which in this life it can do no more than feebly attempt to seize. Without becoming indifferent to the things of this world the soul thus becomes filled with new strength and grows independent of worldly desires. Moreover, *even earthly love itself now becomes stronger and richer than before.*[1] At the same time the soul is no longer enslaved by feeling compelled to seek satisfaction in this direction. Morality alone is incapable of producing this higher freedom. Heavenly love alone is equal in power to earthly love. The way to rise above the allurement and deception of the senses is not by a mere repression of natural feeling, but by its more perfect fulfilment.[2] Plato

[1] This is very beautifully described by Montalembert in his *Life of St. Elizabeth*, a book full of profound psychological truth.

[2] The above passages must not leave the impression that sexual love is in any way to be despised or impoverished. But unless the soul be educated

was the first thinker whose philosophy contained a suggestion of this sexual-educational mission of religion: he reached down to the deepest feelings of the human soul and directed the persistent tendency of the soul to devote itself to perfection, along the path to religious ideals and away from the deceptive images of sexual illusion. His ideal world was based upon that sense of perfection which lies deep in the human soul and makes itself felt as a dim recollection and an unquenchable thirst, which can become absorbed in the material world only through a misapprehension of its own nature: *donec requiescat in te, domine!*

Closely connected with the above mentioned specific pedagogical function of religion is its invaluable protective power. Those who have made a study of the psychology of sexual temptation know that the one really effective safeguard is to prevent the temptation making a conquest of the mind. Religion can penetrate into and occupy the whole mind, thus leaving no chance for sensual temptation to exert a psychological influence: in particular it alone is capable of educating and filling the most endangered portion of the mind—the imagination—and retaining it in a state of purity. Where religion has properly fulfilled its educational function there

through the agency of religion to a sense of its own highest capacity, there is always a danger of sexual love sinking to be a mere servant of the senses and missing its opportunity of enriching the sphere of earthly feeling. Just as buds do not unfold to their full beauty without the influence of the sun, so earthly love does not blossom out in all its richness and perfection unless subject to religious influence; then its feelings and forms, from being the expression of an animal instinct, become the signs and symbols of a higher love. This explanation is very necessary, since there are many who regard spiritual religion as impoverishing the life of the affections.

can be no question of people falling—ignorantly or otherwise—into vicious habits: *a soul which is inspired by the presence of God acquires an unconscious habit of protecting itself from impurity which may be compared to the action of the eyelids in blinking when the dust blows.*

The above described distracting and protective power of religion with regard to sexual matters is so fundamental and so irreplaceable that real chastity and the real avoidance and overcoming of great temptations is (except in rare instances) not possible at all without the educative and elevating influence of religion, at any rate in the case of strong natures.

At the close of these remarks as to the value of religion in sexual education, I must deal shortly with a continually recurring modern allegation against Christianity, namely that it aims at suppressing and extirpating nature in the interests of spiritual culture, that it bases its morality upon a contempt for the sexual functions and for natural life in general. In reading much of our modern literature dealing with the instruction of the young in sexual matters, one is continually struck by the references to the "contempt for nature" and "lack of reverence for the body," which is presumed to be characteristic of Christian ethics.

Now in reality it was not Christianity at all but the decadent period of heathen civilisation which preached an exaggerated antagonism between spirit and body. (The Neo-Platonists, Plotinus, and the Manichæans, for example.) The great classical protagonists of Christianity, such as Augustine, were the very people who made a stand against this excessive dualism and never despised the natural

works of GOD. *Their endeavour was merely to secure strict control over nature.*

But modern thinkers do not read their classics! "Catholica non leguntur." Exaggerated and perverted accounts of Christian teaching are taken at third and fourth hand and not the slightest effort is made to understand the real official teaching of the Church. St. Thomas Aquinas expressed himself in the clearest possible manner with regard to the whole matter and vigorously attacked those who located original sin in the natural instincts instead of in the human soul itself!

As a matter of fact we moderns do not really know what human nature is, since, in our case, the crude human instincts have been calmed and educated as the result of long ethical and religious tradition. The great educators of humanity in the early days of Christianity, on the other hand, lived at a time of utter dissolution; they saw human nature in all its nakedness; they saw what becomes of man when mere nature rules him and when his spiritual life is not awakened and strengthened by elevated ideals and stern discipline.

The fundamental Christian position was defined with such absolute clearness by Dante that every misunderstanding should have been impossible: "It is not nature herself who is corrupt; false guidance it is which has darkened the face of the world." In other words, sin does not lie in the sensuous feelings, but in the abdication of the soul from its true position as captain of the whole man and its subjection to mere nature. It should be borne in mind also that the world of instinct is by no

means unwilling to obey the spirit if the latter take its place as commander with sufficient confidence. *The real sensuous difficulties do not come from the flesh but from the spirit.* When the latter falls from its position as leader it stimulates all the natural instincts to a morbid activity. Hence a view of life which teaches the necessity of self-conquest and aims at putting the spirit in authority, is the best security for the natural and healthy development of our natural functions. The so-called "healthy sensuality" of the moderns is apt to give rise to a capricious and badly controlled state of health.

Thus the Christian philosophy is in no sense concerned with despising or impoverishing natural feelings. It merely desires that they should take their proper place under the guidance of the spirit, thus preserving their fullest vitality. The educator must however bear in mind, as a psychological fact, that such an obedience is not to be obtained when soul and nature are confused, but only when that which should command is clearly distinguished from that which should obey. (It may here be remarked that modern psycho-therapy will increasingly confirm the hygienic importance of such a clear distinction. A concrete experience of the diseases and morbid conditions which arise from a deficient spiritual control over nervous moods and disturbances makes this confirmation inevitable.)

It is true that Christianity sets up a sharp contrast between spirit and nature. This is done, however, merely with the object of enunciating the fact that mere nature, undisciplined and uncultivated, is continually in opposition to the development of

true manhood. The actual truths of this fact must never be obscured or obliterated by any pantheistic or monistic vagueness. I must again insist that this is an educational question of absolutely primary importance, more especially in the case of young people.

Those who wish to subject outer nature to man, need for this purpose the strict laws of pure mathematics, and those whose aim it is to subject human nature to the spirit and to arouse the will to self-activity will need earnest and strict ideals which lift the spiritual clear above the natural and present it in a state of purity and separation from sensuous influences.[1]

In this way alone we acquire a firm basis from which to subject nature to our will. As long as the human will remains mixed up with the natural and sensual, man remains more or less openly subject to the sensuous world. This basis is of the utmost importance for the technique of character-training, and it leads us to comprehend the indispensability of faith in GOD for sexual education in particular. When a child says "I" for the first time, we perceive the first separation of its personality from the outer world; when a man says

[1] There are many signs that doctors and curative educators, in particular, as a result of their experience of psycho-therapy, will return to an understanding of this point of view. Modern psycho-therapeutic literature has now reached a very interesting crisis: it is widely understood that the spirit must be called upon as a curative factor for the conquest of bodily and nervous conditions; at the same time it is perceived that within the modern materialistic view of life the spirit cannot be expected to possess much self-confidence, and that to be effective psycho-therapy needs ideas which lend the spirit strong self-confidence, nay a feeling of "other-worldly" self-realisation. Thus modern psycho-therapy will come back to religion *via* Stoicism, Platonicism, Theosophy, and Indian Philosophy—without being captured on the road by Christian Science!

"GOD" and experiences GOD, there results a still more powerful concentration: the spiritual personality separates itself from the sensuous and sets itself above it, at the same time discovering its completely independent existence with regard to the sensuous world. Carlyle once said, speaking of the time when he abandoned a materialistic view of life and embraced a deep belief in GOD: "From that moment I became a man!" This saying may serve to indicate that a man will remain or become characterless, if he fails to distinguish between spirit and nature. Decision, clarity, and firmness of will are not possible until a man knows with absolute certainty which elements in his personality should command and which obey.

The position of subordination and obedience which Christianity assigns to mere nature is all the more important pedagogically because nature herself takes good care to maintain her own position.

The essence of true deep religion lies in the fact that it clears away the confusing fog in which sensuous and spiritual are deceitfully mingled together, and shows man, with relentless clarity, precisely what nature is and where mere nature leads, and what spirit is and what it demands from man. It is essential that men should come out of this confusion if they are to realise their true manhood. To be manly means to distinguish.

Proceeding along these lines I should like strongly to recommend our educators to read with their pupils the magnificent Platonic dialogues, Phaedo and Phaedrus, which contain a highly instructive piece of sexual education, namely the manner in

which Socrates draws the attention of his pupils to the illusions and tricks by which the sensuous world makes a conquest of our thought, and points out that one cannot become a truly free man without first passing through the stage which the Platonic Socrates calls the "separation of the soul from the body" and its sensuous ideas, instincts, moods, and passions. Those who call this a despising of nature merely demonstrate thereby that they are themselves still under the befogging influence of natural instincts; it is not a question of flight from the world or a flight from nature, but of that which we see every day in the technical sciences, a complete dominion over nature, a perfect service of man on the part of natural elements.

There is one particular central point of difference between the modern sexual reformers and the old ethics and pedagogy; the former do not recognise the whole difficulty which man has in rising above his lower self; they do not realise that even to secure a very small measure of will-power and spiritual freedom it is absolutely necessary to elevate and to enthrone the spirit and to strengthen it in its position of purity and security against nature. The moderns, although they may not know it, are still living upon the moral capital which was stored up during the ages of heroic self-conquest; they have not as yet the faintest idea of the low level to which man will sink when the great commandments and ideals of old shall have entirely given way to the indulgent tolerance with which the modern world regards the sensuous feelings. In the sphere of sex it is peculiarly true that only *the*

most powerful spiritual demands and claims can bring a certain measure of respect from the world of instinct. Many of our modern "enlightened" educators appear to me, therefore, like engineers trying to dam gigantic torrents with wisps of straw. One day, when the water bursts out over the whole country, they will realise the inadequacy of their means.

The above observations belong to the "psychology and pedagogy of spiritual resistance to sensuality." In connection with this subject we should like to refer to one of the chief weaknesses of non-religious education.

Mere moralists who can assign their pupils moral tasks but cannot give them the higher life, who know sacrifice but not the resurrection from sacrifice, do not adequately understand the human soul. They do not realise how much spiritual inspiration is necessary in order to give us really permanent strength and joy in the struggle against our lower nature. And the higher are the spiritual forces which are linked with a passion, the satisfaction of which is forbidden by the conscience, the more essential it is that spiritual leadership should not be confined to barren imperatives, but should appeal to us with the whole living authority and reality of the "humanised Ideal" and lead the straying soul back to its original source.

It should not be forgotten that the lower passions force their objects upon us with immense reality and clearness, and the higher part of our nature is not equal to meeting this if it makes no more than an abstract appeal; it must far surpass the

lower in clearness and reality, living richness, fire, and force of will. It is from this point of view, in particular, that Christianity demonstrates its incomparable power. That it should always have possessed a special attraction for passionate natures is no mere chance! Even Nietzsche, with all his hatred of Christianity, grasped one genuine Christian principle: that the sub-human is overcome only by the *superhuman*, the demonic by the divine. Hence his protest against mere morality, which rejects the lower life without revealing the higher in any vivid and real form. In reality an expansion of life on the lower level cannot be overcome except through an expansion of life on the highest level. In this sense religion must always be the most irreplaceable power in sexual education.

We moderns are too apt to look at the sexual question from *beneath*, from the material side. Religion looks at it from *above*, approaching it from the point of view of spiritual health. Religion does not concern itself with material instruction, but with a majestic gesture it points higher. The great religious characters of history, through the example of their liberation, arouse in man his deeply concealed yearning for true freedom, the unquenchable thirst with which the soul seeks the eternal fountain of its life.

10. THE VALUE OF CHRISTIANITY FOR OUR MORALITY AND CIVILISATION

We continually hear the cry, on the other hand, that Christianity has had two thousand years in

which to demonstrate its educational value, and the result is the state of affairs we have to-day! There is more than one answer to this. In the first place, the condition of modern morality is not the result of Christian teaching, but of the increasing replacement of the same by a treatment of sexual problems which is devoid of ethical definiteness and deficient in character-forming energy. Amongst those who are true Christians there is still found a standard of sexual morality which rests upon firm and well-defined principles. It is in the ranks of those who have abandoned religion that we most frequently find moral laxity and characterless cynicism: their development has often been of a merely negative description. Only too frequently positive religion has been replaced by the theory of "living one's life out."

It is doubtless true that there was much immorality during the Middle Ages, a period of universal belief. But it should not be overlooked that at this time the Church was engaged in disciplining and educating the barbarous raw material of European society. Can anyone believe that it would have been possible for the Church, in the course of a few centuries, from the time of outward conversion, so to train all the raw and half-animal tribes she took under her wing that they became moral Christians? Rather is it a matter for astonishment, that in the midst of such barbarism, the Church was able to produce, as she did, so many great men of such singular purity and holiness. Not less surprising is the profound reverence with which the masses regarded these personalities,

opposed as they were to all the natural ideals of a warlike period!

The present age, too, is not without its testimony to the restraining and disciplining value of religion. "Whatever one may think of the dogmas of religion," says the French philosopher, A. Fouillée, "it must at any rate be admitted that religion is a restraining moral force of the first order. . . . Christianity, in particular, has been correctly described as a complete system of government for all evil impulses." To-day we may clearly perceive, with both Christians and Jews, how incomparably better disciplined and more principled, as a rule, are the orthodox sections, with regard to sexual matters, than those who have lost definite faith. It remains true enough that in spite of all the religious influence of the greatest ages of faith the crude natural forces sometimes break away from restraint. Those who do not properly comprehend the true weakness of human nature will always be apt to attribute this phenomenon to the effect of religion itself. Perhaps the best method of convincing those moderns who take up this attitude would be to entrust a race of semi-barbarians to their guidance and educational methods; they would then have an opportunity of seeing how great is the weakness of human nature, and would all the better appreciate the gigantic educational accomplishment of Christianity. It is not improbable that in the near future we may witness for a short time such an experiment as this. For some time yet we shall doubtless witness a rapid decline of religious influence. There will be a gradual

dissolution of all authoritative truth, and the vague subjectivity of a so-called "autonomous ethic" will continue to make its logical consequences felt with ever-increasing clearness: following upon this will come an appalling moral degeneration which will gradually permeate the masses. Vice and perversity will no longer be confined to comparatively small circles of society, but will be free to spread in all directions. The most honourable traditions of humanity will then reckon for nothing, as in the story of the emperor's daughter, Julia, who left her father's palace to walk the streets as a prostitute. It will then be self-evident that the mere man employs his natural intelligence to become more brutal than any brute, unless the human soul be lifted above the service of the senses by the elevated spirituality of religion, showing it the path of its true life.

CONCLUSION

THE author knows only too well that he will not convert the upholders of the "new morality." He therefore appeals, in the first place, to the young men and women of to-day. It is his sincere hope that they will not be so misled by the plausible phrases of modern writers, and by the term "new morality," as to believe that any fresh vital force lies behind the new gospel of moral license. On the contrary, this whole tendency is a symptom of *weakness and exhaustion*. It is an old and tired phase of thought, which *resigns the will to the dominion of instincts and desires*. Even at its best, it stands for a weak and short-sighted sympathy, lacking in the manly knowledge that the most merciful social system is one founded upon definite order. The conquering spiritual power of the old way of life best corresponds to the temper of youth. Here youthful strength finds its highest aims. Here it meets with its greatest test of will-power at the very threshold of life.

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